



CHARLES KELLEY LADY A'S FRONTMAN GOES OUT ON HIS OWN

NASH NEXT ARTIST SPOTLIGHT WITH CHRIS JANSON

NASH Country Weekly

COUNTRY FOR LIFE | NOVEMBER 2, 2015

THE GAMBLER
KENNY ROGERS GOES ALL IN ON HIS LAST TOUR

THE
►►►NEXT CHAPTER
CARRIE UNDERWOOD HAS A STORY TO TELL WITH HER NEW ALBUM

PLUS!

WHO WILL WIN? OUR CMA AWARD PREDICTIONS

INSIDE RAY SCOTT'S WEDDING

EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS!

CHARLIE DANIELS VOLUNTEERS TO BRING BACK THE JAM

DAVID NAIL FINDS HIS HAPPY PLACE

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1983 SATURDAY,
OCT. 29



“Island” Bound

In early 1983, **KENNY ROGERS** was in the studio, trying with all his vocal might to nail a song written by pop group the Bee Gees. But he was hitting the wall with

each pass. “I had been in the studio for four days trying to sing this song,” Kenny told Country Weekly in 2013. “I sang it until I was blue in the face.” Kenny revealed his frustrations to the Bee Gees’ Barry Gibb, who was producing the track. Barry immediately came up with the perfect solution. What the song needed was a second voice, a duet partner for Kenny. “It was like an epiphany,” Kenny recalled. “He said, ‘We need Dolly Parton.’ Just like that. Forty-five minutes later, she walked in the studio and the song was never the same.” The tune in question was “Islands in the Stream,” a title taken from an Ernest Hemingway novel. And the resulting cut yielded a hit of Hemingwayan proportion. “Islands in the Stream” breezed to No. 1 on Oct. 29, 1983, and also topped the pop charts the same day. In 2005, it was named the greatest country duet of all time by CMT.

Kenny & Dolly by GAB Archive/Getty Images; Kacey by Christopher Polk/Getty Images

2015



OCT. 27: THINK PINK

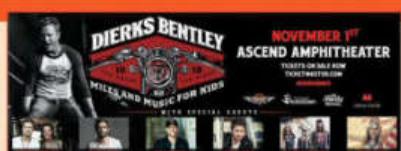
The Grand Ole Opry joins Women Rock for the Cure in the fight against breast cancer for the seventh annual “Opry Goes Pink” show at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville.



on Oct. 27. **KACEY MUSGRAVES** will headline the show. A portion of every ticket sold will be donated to Women Rock for the Cure.

OCT. 30: FLOAT YOUR BOAT

On the crest of his smash hit “Buy Me a Boat,” **CHRIS JANSON** will be releasing an album of the same name on Oct. 30. Chris wrote or co-wrote all 11 tunes on the record.



NOV. 1: MILES OF SMILES

DIERKS BENTLEY bikes for charity again as he hosts his 10th annual Miles & Music for Kids motorcycle ride and concert in Nashville on Nov. 1, benefiting the Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt. After the ride to Nashville’s new Ascend Amphitheater, Dierks will perform a concert at the venue with guests **FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE**, **THOMAS RHETT**, **COLE SWINDELL** and others.

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The "My Kind of Music" singer ties the knot with the lady of his dreams in a beautiful outdoor setting.

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He's in a free-flowing mode after battling depression for more than a decade.

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Who's going to take home the big prizes at this year's Country Music Association awards? Here are our NCW writers' bold and brainy predictions.

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It's been a full-plate year with his revival of Volunteer Jam and a live album recorded at Billy Bob's Texas.

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Miranda Lambert, Johnny Cash and others receive their honorary stars at the Music City Walk of Fame ceremony.

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The Sixpence None the Richer singer releases the country album she's always imagined.

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40 On the Cover CARRIE UNDERWOOD

appropriately taps into the art of telling tales on her latest album, *Storyteller*. A few of the tracks, she says, might be a little surprising even for longtime fans.

PLUS!



27 CHRIS JANSON

He's been an industry favorite for years, but now the public's catching on after his first major smash hit, "Buy Me a Boat." The singer/songwriter talks about his long and winding road.



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FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Readers,

Carrie Underwood has had her hands full this year with *Sunday Night Football*; her latest single, "Smoke Break"; new album, *Storyteller*; a fitness apparel line; being a mom to her baby boy and so much more. Still, Carrie found some time in her busy schedule to talk to us about her new music and how she has grown her global appeal.

In the Nash Next section, we talk to "Buy Me a Boat" singer

Chris Janson. I'm so happy for Chris' success, as I know he and his wife have been pounding the pavement in support of his music and it's now making a big splash—not to mention the fact that he's a really nice guy. Chris sat down with us to talk about the support he's received and how it feels to have his first No. 1 single.

Congrats to Ray Scott and his wife, Stacey. The two recently wed in a small ceremony in front of family and friends. You can check out the photos of their wedding on page 24.

Don't miss next week's issue, on stands Nov. 2, when we chat with Miranda Lambert and the ladies of the Roadside Bars and Pink Guitars Tour.

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK!

LISA KONICKI, EDITOR IN CHIEF

FROM THE READER



Shoot us an email, a comment or a tweet and let us know what you think!

Letters, Nash Country Weekly, 506 2nd. Ave. South, Suite 200, Nashville, TN 37210

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Please include your name, address and daytime phone number with all correspondence. Nash Country Weekly assumes no responsibility for returning unsolicited material, including, but not limited to, photographs, artwork, manuscripts and letters. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

OH SCOTTY BOY

I am new to *Nash Country Weekly*. I look forward to every week when my NCW arrives. Scotty McCreery has been in quite a few issues and I love it! He is one of my favorites. I have followed Scotty since *Idol* and attended many of his concerts. The photo shoot in the Sept. 28 issue was super! Go Scotty!

A. BECKETT | Racine, Wis.

LOOKING FINE

Each week I look forward to receiving and reading *Nash Country Weekly*. I seem to enjoy each issue more and more. Thank you for this fine magazine.

PAULA BEHM | Gettysburg, Pa.

FACEBOOK

There are too many men on [the NCW Sexiest Man list] that I think are sexy.

TIFFANY ALISHA

[Leah Turner] can cut a horse, blaze a saddle and surely perform her tail off. Can't wait to watch.

SANTOS VASQUEZ

I'm so excited that you [Jana Kramer] have found love and are having a beautiful baby girl soon! My daughter and I have been following you since you started singing and you left *One Tree Hill*! We can't wait to see more great things from you!! Congratulations.

ROBBYN RICHTER

Please put Reba McEntire back on the cover.

BETHANY PERRY

Country Music Awards??? There is no real country music anymore.

GORDON WYLIE

There are plenty of women singers but radio stations don't play their music. I would rather listen to women sing than bro country crap every single day.

MARIA PERRON

TWITTER

Such a cool thing to be a part of [Second Harvest Food Bank] Thanks for sharing. @countryweekly!

PHIL VASSAR

@philvassar

@countryweekly @TobyKeithMusic very nice article on Toby . . . the man and the music, but family drives him as well. Thanks for showing a great guy.

PATTYP

@pp514

Vote! @chuckwicksmusic @countryweekly Country Music's Sexiest Man #HubbaHubba

LISA-MARIE

@LISAMARIE4KOTB

If you get a chance, grab a copy of this week's edition of @countryweekly for a must-read story about @parmalee

MORNING HANGOVER

@MorningHangover

@countryweekly Scotty McCreery. One handsome young man! Have Mercy!

VICKIE ROSE

@veryrose15



20 #1 HITS

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"BOYS ROUND HERE,"
"AUSTIN," "MINE WOULD BE YOU,"
AND MANY, MANY MORE!

BLAKE SHELTON

RELOADED: 20 #1 HITS

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FIRST TAKE

DIG IN

The crew from RFD-TV's hit series *Larry's Country Diner*, along with some country-star buddies, prepares to break ground for a real-life diner location west of downtown Nashville, tentatively scheduled to open in mid-2016. (From left) Exile's Steve Goetzman and Marlon Hargis, "Sheriff" Jimmy Capps, Renae the Waitress, host and creator Larry Black, "church lady" Nadine, announcer Keith Bilbrey, Jeannie Seely, Bill Anderson and T. Graham Brown

LARRY'S Country DINER

Opening
in 2016



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photo by Phil Johnson / Webster PR



THE COUNTRY

BREW

A SWEET TASTE OF ALL THINGS COUNTRY

Opening Act



DÉJÀ VOODOO

There will be plenty of good mojo going around as the 17th annual Voodoo Fest once again invades the city of New Orleans Oct. 30–Nov. 1. Featuring a star-studded lineup of acts across all genres of music—including Ozzy Osbourne, Florence + the Machine, Jane's Addiction, Third Eye Blind, Deadmau5 and more—country fans can get their fix from headliner **ZAC BROWN BAND**, **JASON ISBELL** and **RYAN BINGHAM**. Now, go do that voodoo that you do so well.



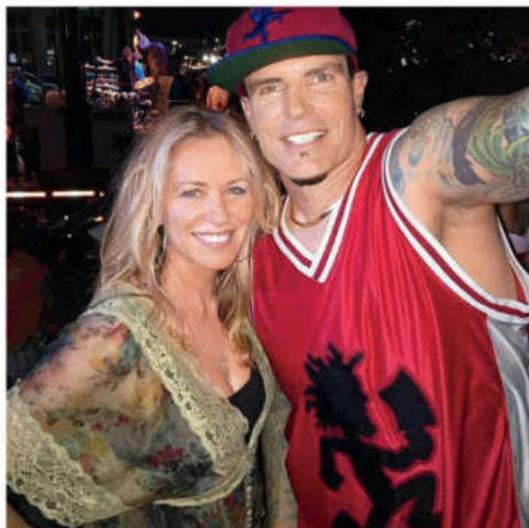
(Clockwise from above) **OUTSIDER LINEBACKER** Eric Church argues with the hosts of ESPN's College Gameday about which SEC team will win the championship this year; **VROOM** Canaan Smith shows off his two-wheeler; **BANJO MAN** Comedian/musician Steve Martin is one wild and crazy guy when it comes to his Distinguished Achievement honor from the International Bluegrass Music Association.



THE COUNTRY BREW

All Access

(Clockwise from right) **NO BLANK SPACE** Hillary Scott is folded into an adorable sandwich between Kelsea Ballerini (left) and Taylor Swift; **RELATIVITY SPEAKING** Connie Britton explains to Science Guy Bill Nye that string theory means something entirely different in Nashville; **WINE ON ICE** Deana Carter and Vanilla Ice discuss whose biggest hit has been played at more proms.



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Charles in Charge

On Sept. 30, **LADY ANTEBELLUM's CHARLES KELLEY** played a Nashville show that was quite unusual for one important reason: it was the rare instance where he was singing on a stage without being flanked by Hillary Scott and Dave Haywood.

Both Dave and Hillary were in the crowd, however, showing their support for Charles' upcoming solo project. Charles was careful to note that his primary band isn't done—they're just taking a little breather—but it was impossible to miss his excitement for this new chapter in his musical career.

"Lady A is always going to be my main focus, but it

sure was fun to make music without any agenda, any pressure," he remarked. Guests—who ranged from industry folk to **MIRANDA LAMBERT** and **MARTINA McBRIDE**—got a little taste of what to expect from the forthcoming EP recorded by Lady A collaborator Paul Worley, including the devastating ballad "Leaving Nashville," written by Abe Stoklasa and Donovan Woods.

Charles also covered Tom Petty's "Southern Accents," noting that Stevie Nicks will appear on the recorded version.

The project's first single, "The Driver," included guest vocalists **DIERKS BENTLEY**



and **ERIC PASLAY**. The piano-propelled tune takes a page from Jackson Browne, offering a weary look at the road from the perspective of the bus driver, the singer and the dreamers who create the songs that fans want to sing.

Lady Antebellum has one remaining show scheduled

in 2015: the NASH "Hearts Unsung" benefit concert for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, slated to take place Nov. 9 at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville.

No release date has been announced for Charles' EP as of yet, but "The Driver" is now available for purchase.



FOILED AGAIN!

Pranks have become just as much a country music tour ritual as pre-show prayer circles, post-show Taco Bell runs and truck stop beef jerky. But **DIERKS BENTLEY** may have just taken the crown as King of Pranks. Christening newcomers **MADDIE & TAE** into the hard-core world of pranking, he and his crew wrapped the inside of the girls' tour bus in aluminum foil. Not just a little—a lot. Even the duo's cosmetic bags were wrapped. Dierks should probably be watching his back... and his bus.



NEWS of NOTE

HEALTH NEWS



BONNIE BROWN, the younger sister of the late **JIM ED BROWN**, has been

diagnosed with a form of cancer in her right lung. The same disease led to the death of her brother earlier this year.

IN MEMORY



Hunter Montgomery, son of Montgomery Gentry's **EDDIE MONTGOMERY**, died of an apparent drug overdose on Sept. 27 at age 19.

RECOVERING



Nashville producer **DAVE BRAINARD** was severely injured when he was attacked by two people on a street near Nashville's Music Row area. Dave, who has produced albums for **BRANDY CLARK, JERROD NIEMANN** and many others, underwent reconstructive surgery because of the injuries to his face and mouth. The suspected assailants have been arrested and charged.

AWARDS



SHANE MCANALLY scored four nominations for the 49th annual CMA Awards on Nov. 4. In addition to picking up double songwriting nods in the Single of the Year category for **KENNY CHESNEY**'s "American Kids" and **SAM HUNT**'s "Take Your Time," Shane was nominated as a producer for Album of the Year for **KACEY MUSGRAVES**' *Pageant Material* and for Single of the Year for Sam's aforementioned "Take Your Time."



HIGH FIVE

BLAKE SHELTON NO. 1 PARTY LOSERS BAR | NASHVILLE

Blake Shelton had five times the reason to celebrate recently in Nashville on Sept. 24 as he toasted to his latest quintet of chart-topping hits. Blake and the songwriters responsible for the songs were honored for "Doing What She Likes" (Wade Kirby and Phil "Philbilly" O'Donnell), "My Eyes" (Andrew Dorff, Tommy Lee James and Josh Osborne), "Neon Light" (Andrew Dorff, Mark Irwin and Josh Kear), "Lonely Tonight" (Ryan Hurd and Brent Anderson) and "Sangria" (J.T. Harding, Josh Osborne and Trevor Rosen). Combined, those five songs have spent a total of 200 weeks on the charts and extended Blake's record-breaking streak of back-to-back No. 1s.

The outside patio of Losers Bar in Midtown was packed with hundreds, filling the parking lot below the deck. Blake stood beneath fans (the electric kind) and sipped away on his cold Bud Light while the songwriters behind the hits got their moment in the spotlight. After patiently waiting for nearly two hours, Blake thanked the key people in his life for the countless hours put into making his career what it is today, especially the songwriters standing beside him.

"I'm literally nothing and don't even exist without these songwriters that write these songs for me," Blake said. "It is important to me to continue to look for the best songs. It's important to me that we don't get stuck in a rut with our songs, so we keep pushing forward and looking for the best and the next thing to do. So thank you, songwriters, for pushing yourselves and giving me a chance to record your songs."



Choice Cuts

Carrie Underwood has a big fall ahead of her with her new album, *Storyteller*, arriving in stores on Oct. 23 and her CMA Awards co-hosting gig on Nov. 4. You'll likely be seeing her face in numerous outlets, but make sure to check out her feature on *Music Choice's* Pioneers series. In the episode, Carrie talks candidly about success, creating *Storyteller* and the forces that compel her to make music. Cable subscribers can catch it on *Music Choice* between Oct. 19 and Nov. 4.



BIRTHDAYS

OCT. 26, 1967
KEITH URBAN

OCT. 27, 1936
CHARLIE DANIELS

OCT. 27, 1942
LEE
GREENWOOD

OCT. 28, 1972
BRAD PAISLEY

OCT. 30, 1954
T. GRAHAM BROWN

OCT. 30, 1976
KASSIDY OSBORN
of SHeDAISY

OCT. 31, 1944
KINKY FRIEDMAN

OCT. 31, 1964
DARRYL WORLEY

NOV. 1, 1937
BILL ANDERSON

NOV. 1, 1957
LYLE LOVETT

NOV. 1, 1963
BIG KENNY ALPHIN
of Big & Rich

Gutted & Carved

If there's one surefire way to let trick-or-treaters know you're a certified country music devotee this Halloween, it's by carving Reba McEntire's face into a pumpkin and setting it aglow on your front porch. OK, OK, it doesn't have to be Reba's face—you can pick from more than 20 templates at gactv.com, ranging from Luke Bryan and Dolly Parton to Darius Rucker and George Strait. Now, gut those pumpkins and get carving.

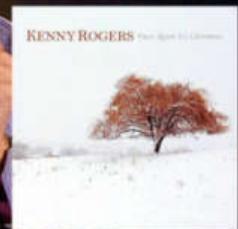


FOLD 'EM

After 57 years, **KENNY "THE GAMBLER" ROGERS** is getting up from the table and cashing in his chips. In September, Kenny announced on NBC's *Today* show that his upcoming 2016 World Tour would be his last. "I've done this long enough," said the Country Music Hall of Fame

member. "I really want to be there with my kids and my wife. I don't see enough of them. And I have some things on my bucket list." Dates for the upcoming tour will be

announced soon. In the meantime, you can get your Kenny fix from his recently released holiday album, *Once Again It's Christmas*.



KICKIN' IT

CAM KICKS IT WITH KIX



KIX: Let's talk about your single first. I love how it just came naturally.

CAM: I had "My Mistake" out. Then I went on the Opry and played that and this other song, "Burning House," and it got such a great reaction. Then I ended up replaying that song on the radio and the iTunes charts blew up. Everybody was downloading it. It's so cool to have it not be [so] planned. Go figure. That organic sort of stuff seemed to work really well.

KIX: It's so visual, and it was inspired by a dream you had. Walk me through the dream and why you thought this was going to be a great song.

CAM: Well, I don't know that I knew it was going to be a great song at first, but I was going to see an ex that I had broken up with, we were on-again/off-again, and the last time we broke up it was my fault and I didn't do a very good job of handling it. It wasn't very nice. So about a year or two later, I was going to see him at a party and thought, "Now's my chance, I can sort of apologize for not doing that so well." I thought a lot about how I would handle it when I saw him. And I guess I just had all that on my mind, so then when I went to bed, I had this really vivid dream about this house on fire and there's all these people around it and I run up and everyone's saying you can't go in there, it's about to come down, he's in there. But you can't go in there. So I run in, of course, and sure enough he's in there and he's trapped and instead of deciding to leave and save myself, I just stay there and lay

down next to him and hold him so he doesn't have to die alone. And we die together in this burning house and it's really dramatic. It was just all these feelings of guilt and how I should have handled it better, and also this person was very important to me. You just have all these leftover feelings, even though they are not the right person and there is no outlet for them because you are not together anymore, and especially the way I ended things, we definitely weren't friends, either. So there was no way to just say you are important to me and I want to keep having

you in my life. So the only way to really have that connection and outlet for those feelings was in this dream. I ended up calling my main co-writer, Tyler Johnson, and saying, "I had this crazy dream." He literally grabbed a guitar and started playing that lick that's on it and saying back exactly what I said to him. I was like "No way." It sounded so cool as a song. It was just so real. Some things that you sing when they make you uncomfortable, I think that's a good thing.

KIX: What have you been hearing that the impact of the song has been on people?

CAM: A lot of people have breakups, maybe they stayed in it too long. There's maybe a few times where you have a real clean, easy breakup, but I think in most situations, it definitely falls apart. And I think there's a lot of leftover feelings about those situations and that everybody can relate to this and they kind of put their own situation into it, which is really nice. And then there are a few people who, which is really sad, have reached out who have lost people in house fires. And they literally are very much affected by the song and what it means. And that part is really heavy for me because

then I feel like, "Man, I just had a bad breakup and you lost someone." And the song is very meaningful for them. It's a lot to kind of process everyone's stuff. It's a really amazing thing to feel connected to everybody and that we all have just stuff that's rough.

KIX: Are you into dreams and analyzing a dream?

CAM: I don't know how much stock I put into it, but it's fun to try to do. It's fun to try and remember your dreams and try and retell them.

KIX: You have a background in psychology?

CAM: Yeah, probably about five years ago I switched out of psychology but I was doing psych research, like emotions research. So I was helping people in labs that

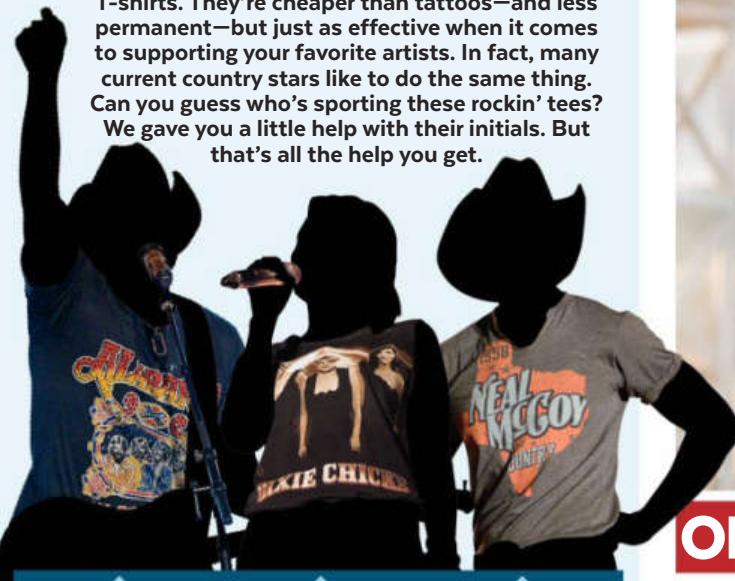
were doing cool things that I liked and looking at different cultures and which emotions they value. And I think looking at emotions is definitely what songwriters do: understanding the emotions that are motivating your behavior and why you're doing things. Songs, for me, have an emotion that you can kind of name, that's sort of like a unifying theme about what that song is. That and just the storytelling where you have funny songs, too. But yeah, I think it helped a lot, when I decided to go into music, to have that background.



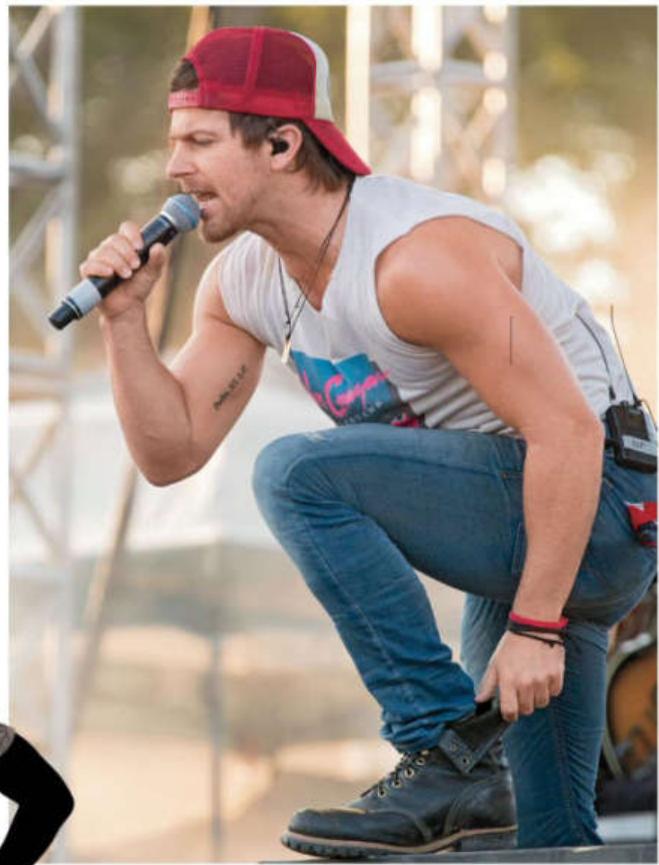
Cam tells interviewer Kix Brooks how her dream-inspired hit "Burning House" caught fire with fans.

T-SHIRT TIME ONSTAGE

T-shirts. They're cheaper than tattoos—and less permanent—but just as effective when it comes to supporting your favorite artists. In fact, many current country stars like to do the same thing. Can you guess who's sporting these rockin' tees? We gave you a little help with their initials. But that's all the help you get.



B P	M L	T M
C J	K U	K T



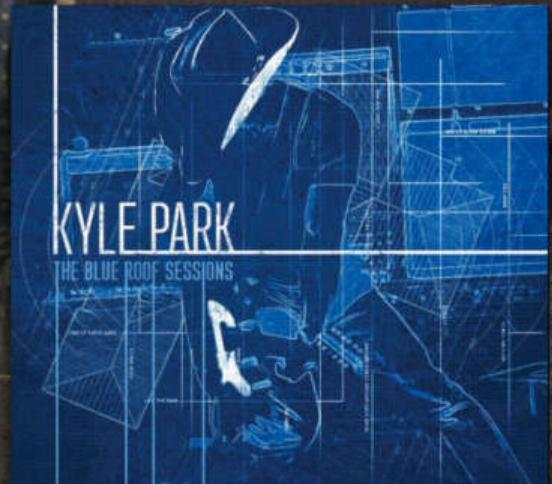
ON TOUR **KIP MOORE** WILD ONES TOUR Opening: Michael Ray

OCT. 16 London, Ont. London Music Hall	NOV. 5 Knoxville, Tenn. Tennessee Theatre	NOV. 20 San Antonio Cowboys Dance Hall
OCT. 17 Toronto, Ont. Danforth Music Hall	NOV. 7 Springfield, Ill. Boondocks	NOV. 21 Ft. Worth, Texas Billy Bob's Texas
OCT. 22 Chicago Joe's Bar	NOV. 7 Cleveland The Masonic Temple	NOV. 27 Myrtle Beach, S.C. House of Blues
OCT. 23 Chicago Joe's Bar	NOV. 13 Orlando, Fla. House of Blues	NOV. 28 Charlotte, N.C. Coyote Joe's Charlotte
OCT. 24 Mankato, Minn. Verizon Wireless Center	NOV. 14 Ft. Myers, Fla. The Ranch Concert Hall	DEC. 3 New York Terminal 5
OCT. 30 Boston House of Blues	NOV. 15 St. Petersburg, Fla. RibFest	DEC. 4 Sayreville, N.J. Starland Ballroom
OCT. 31 Baltimore Rams Head Live	NOV. 19 Nacogdoches, Texas Banita Creek Hall	DEC. 5 Richmond, Va. The National

Kip by Danie Des over/Corbis T-shirts top row L to R: Ethan Miller/Getty Images; Daniel Des over/Zuma Wire; Ricky Bassman/Corbis; Jason Moore/Academy of Country Music

KYLE PARK

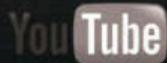
NEW ALBUM
OUT TODAY!



First Single

"WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND"

Featured on CMT Pure, GAC, and ZUUS



VEVO

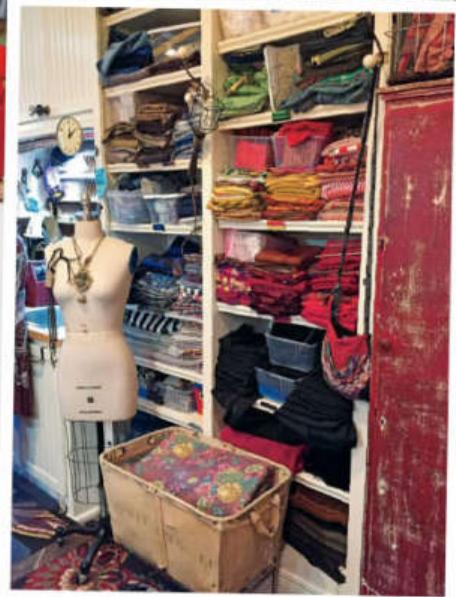
iTunes





Tennessee THREADS

CHRISTIEV ALPHIN PUTS HER OWN SPIN ON HIGH FASHION AS SHE GETS GEARED UP FOR A ONE-OF-A-KIND FUNDRAISER AND RUNWAY EVENT.



SHOW-STOPPING FASHION, incredible music and charity—Nashville's creative community has long been known for collaboration and giving back. On November 1, the inaugural Off the Record Fashion Show will ignite a Music City collaboration that we hope will be around for years to come.

For longtime celebrity stylist, fashion designer and Off the Record fashion director Christiev Alphin, the opportunity to have Gucci, John Varvatos and Kaufman Franco (responsible for Taylor Swift's new high-fashion style) sharing the same stage with well-known local designers

Peter Nappi, Amanda Valentine, Tribe Kelley by Brian and Brittney Kelley, and many more is a dream come true.

"We have these world-famous designers who know Nashville and are wanting to explore the greatness that we have here," says Christiev, the wife of Big & Rich's Big Kenny. "Then we have local designers who have garnered national attention sharing the same stage. We are getting to raise everyone up together. And when you have all these incredible creative minds in the same room, you never know what amazing things can happen."

The decision to feature local designers was vital to that artistry that

Christiev wanted to portray throughout the show. But with so much talent and creativity in Nashville, it was difficult to decide which designers to feature.

"It is no different than an artist coming to Nashville to be a singer," she says. "These guys live for their art. They are working at it and in it already and they are working hard. I see them at the flea market all the time, looking for materials, constantly researching and growing their craft. There are so many incredible local designers that it was difficult to decide who to feature. We really had to look at how much time we had in the show and who would have pieces ready to show in time."



Christiev's studio boasts materials galore—for whenever the muse visits.



(Above) Christiev keeps a wall of inspiration in her design studio at home.



As a wardrobe designer and stylist who has worked with Big & Rich, Keith Urban, Little Big Town, Frankie Ballard and many more, Christiev draws inspiration from her home design studio, where she has created many of her custom pieces. It was a meeting in that same studio that sparked the initial collaboration for Off the Record with show producer Gil Cunningham of Neste Event Marketing.

"Gil called and said they had this idea they wanted to talk to us about," Christiev begins. "He and Kenny have worked together before and I've been such a big fan of his and vice versa. I didn't even ask what they wanted to

meet about—I just said come over. He basically said, 'Here is our idea, what do you think?' I loved it and knew we wanted it to be amazing."

Held at Sylvia Roberts' estate, best known as Rayna James' home on ABC's *Nashville*, the event will also feature performances by Tommy Shaw of Styx, Phil Vassar, Kaleo, Chase Bryant, Big Kenny, Old Dominion and The Cadillac Three. Proceeds from the event will go to Second Harvest Food Bank of Tennessee.

"Off the Record is combining two of my greatest passions—family and fashion," says Christiev. "My family, and being able to take care of them,

is the most important thing in my life. Food is essential and one of our most basic of needs. Second Harvest does such an incredible job of helping families. They are meeting people right where they are. And hopefully, by providing for people's basic needs, it will help them to get out of the difficult situations they are in."

Aside from the fashion, music and charity, Christiev will have one more special reason to celebrate when Off the Record kicks off Nov. 1.

"It is my husband's birthday," she says, laughing. "We are calling it a birthday present for him."

ASHLEY EICHER

SWEET SALUTE

JIM ED BROWN'S SISTERS MAXINE AND BONNIE PAY A LOVING TRIBUTE TO THEIR BROTHER WITH HIS FAVORITE CHEESECAKE RECIPE.

The late Grand Ole Opry stalwart Jim Ed Brown was just as comfortable in the kitchen as he was on the famed Opry stage. "Jim Ed was a very good cook," older sister Maxine tells NCW. "He even took some cooking classes."

Jim Ed and his sisters Maxine and Bonnie formed the pioneering singing group The Browns in the 1950s, before Jim Ed established his solo career. For their achievements, Jim Ed Brown—who passed away in June—and The Browns were inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame, with the official Medallion Ceremony taking place Oct. 25. Back in March, on the night when they received the Hall of Fame news, Jim Ed invited his sisters to his Nashville home for a celebratory meal, topped off by Jim Ed's yummy cheesecake. "He would always make that for us whenever we came by," Maxine recalls.

Maxine and Bonnie share Jim Ed's recipe, featuring his own handwritten notations, as a warm salute to their beloved brother.

BOB PAXMAN



Bonnie (left) and Maxine give Jim Ed a double helping of his homemade cheesecake during a Country Music Hall of Fame dinner party in March.

Creamy Cheesecake with Graham Cracker Crust

Crust: Serves 8-10

4 ounces graham crackers, ground (about 2 cups)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon fine sea salt
 2 tablespoons sugar
 2 ounces unsalted butter ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup), melted *add a little more than calls for. PACK DOWN GOOD.*

Custard:
 2 pounds cream cheese, room temperature (SOFT) beat well.
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 12 ounces sugar (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups)
 4 eggs
Topping:
 2 cups crème fraîche — (SOUR CREAM) to make this
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 2 tablespoons sugar

SHAKE ALL DURING COOK. 3 SIDES + BOTTOM NINETY SEVEN

1. Crust: In a bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Press mixture onto the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan. *Custard: In the bowl of an electric mixer, mix the cheese until it is smooth. Add vanilla and sugar, mixing until combined. Add eggs one at a time and mix until mixture is smooth and creamy. Pour over the crust and bake in a preheated 325° oven for 1 hour. Turn off the heat and leave in the oven for 30-45 minutes or until the center of the cake no longer jiggles and the top is set. Remove from oven and allow to cool to room temperature.*
2. Topping: In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix until smooth. Spread on cooled cheesecake and bake in a preheated 450° oven for 5-7 minutes.
3. Remove from oven, allow to cool and refrigerate until well chilled, about 8 hours. Unmold onto a decorative platter and serve.

Make It Ahead: Make in advance and refrigerate up to 3 days or freeze up to 1 month. If made the same day, allow a minimum of 10 hours: 2 hours for baking, and 8 hours for chilling.

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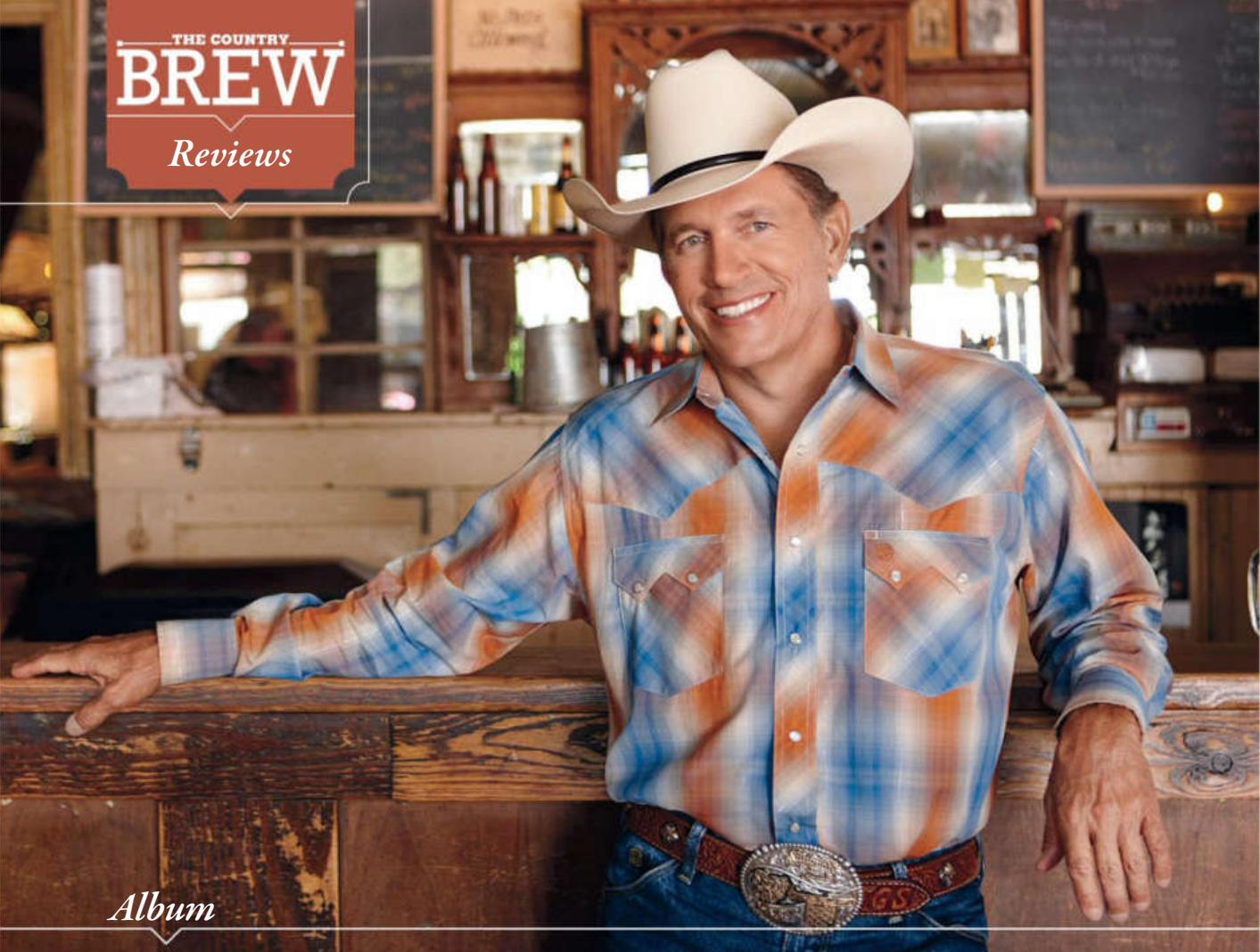
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*Album***George Strait***Cold Beer Conversation*

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

A-

While so many country artists are twisting, turning and contorting themselves to fit the new face of country music, the King of Country ambles in with a project that is purely and

quintessentially George.

Most country acts who hail from Texas will tell you that a sign of success is a full dance floor. *Cold Beer Conversation* provides plenty of tracks to accomplish that goal without alienating the more sedentary set. Shuffling grooves like the one on the beach-ready "Stuff Like That," brimming with pedal steel and accordion, are sure to raise a smile as much as scoop a boot, while the slow-rolling "Wish You Well" layers evocative imagery atop its relaxed rhythm. Now, we're warning y'all, it will be a lot harder to sit still during the wide-open, Bob Wills-esque swinger "It Takes All Kinds," or the last-call

belly-bumper "Something Going Down," so proceed to listen with caution.

Another thing we love about George is his ability to present meaningful songs in a palatable way. "Let It Go," with its B-3 organ and steel-drum-infused groove, reminds us that life is gonna happen, so just chill out. The disc's restorative song of hope and faith, "Even When I Can't Feel It," gets almost ethereal, thanks to George's warm, introspective vocal.

It gets personal for the country music icon when he salutes Lone Star pride with the Brandy Clark- and Shane McAnally-penned "Take Me to Texas," certain

to inspire a few tattoos. But you'll want to grab a tissue when you hear "Everything I See," the heartbreaking and inspirational homage to George's late father. Nestled among the flavors that George's fans have come to know and love is the somewhat edgier "Rock Paper Scissors." The track may sound jarring upon first listen, but by the fourth or fifth, it reveals an interesting mash-up that pits amped-up fiddle and steel against propulsive hi-hat and guitar. We see what you're doing, George. You may retire from touring, but, thank God, you'll never wander far.

TAMMY RAGUSA

Singles

THE NCW JUKEBOX

Essential songs that won the CMA Single of Year.

JOHNNY CASH
“A Boy Named Sue”
1969

MERLE HAGGARD
“Okie From Muskogee” 1970

KENNY ROGERS
“Lucille” 1979

GEORGE JONES
“He Stopped Loving Her Today” 1980

WILLIE NELSON
“Always on My Mind” 1982

RANDY TRAVIS
“Forever and Ever, Amen” 1987

KEITH WHITLEY
“I’m No Stranger to the Rain” 1989

GARTH BROOKS
“Friends in Low Places” 1991

ALAN JACKSON
“Chattahoochee”
1993

GEORGE STRAIT
“Check Yes or No”
1996

DIXIE CHICKS
“Wide Open Spaces”
1999

LOOK
FOR THIS
NASH COUNTRY WEEKLY
PLAYLIST ON

rdio

Charles Kelley

feat. Eric Paslay and Dierks Bentley
“The Driver”

CAPITOL RECORDS NASHVILLE

A-



Charles Kelley's first solo single away from Lady Antebellum isn't a solo record at all—supported by the formidable talents of Dierks Bentley and Eric

Paslay (who fares much better here than on “High Class”), he gets a nice little buddy cushion to soften the landing. Like Jackson Browne’s “The Load Out” or Bob Seger’s “Turn the Page” and countless others, it’s a song about the highs and lows of the gypsy life playing shows on the road. The stately, stripped-down waltz lets each artist take a verse that embodies some aspect of the touring musician’s life: the driver who pulls long hours to transport artists to the next stop, the dreamer who composes the songs and, finally, the singer who communicates them onstage. Charles’ proclivity for the exuberant whoa-whoa clearly survived his primary group’s hiatus intact, and nary a hair feels out of place on this, but it’s a nice reminder of what a tremendously soulful singer he is when he just lets it rip. Very promising, indeed. **JON FREEMAN**

Album

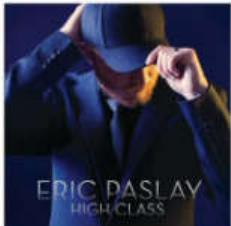


Eric Paslay

“High Class”

EMI NASHVILLE

D



Well, they said you were “High Class,” but that was just a lie. Welcome to one of the worst records of the year, and certainly the most pathetic.

After failing to crack the Top 10 with his last couple efforts, Eric, a normally quite talented singer/songwriter, apparently decided he’d better get with this whole EDM-as-country thing. It practically screams, “Please play my record!” and what’s worse, radio seems to be complying. The bluesy intro offers up a little promise, but “High Class” quickly deteriorates into a mosh pit of drum machines (aren’t there *real* drummers in Nashville?), thin horns and contemptible lyrics that urge us to *Cadi up this lac*. There’s even a reference to Justin Timberlake, making the sellout complete. If it appeared that he was joking around, all might be forgiven. But the vocal and the overall tone of the song aren’t self-aware enough for the tune to be taken as a novelty. He’s actually serious about this mess.

BOB PAXMAN

Corb Lund

Things That Can’t Be Undone

NEW WEST RECORDS

A

Part 1870s cowboy, part 1970s alt-country honky-tonker, singer-songwriter Corb Lund can spin a narrative yarn as well as weave

several into a complete album, as evidenced by his new record, *Things That Can’t Be Undone*. Produced by Dave Cobb (Sturgill Simpson, Chris Stapleton), the 10-song offering—all of which was written or co-written by Corb—fires true with its first shot, “Weight of the Gun,” a fusion of Western moxie and Motown, complete with rattling tambourine. From there, Corb summons his inner Dwight Yoakam and swaggers his way through “Alt Berliner Blues” before breaking into “Sad City,” an East-meets-West guitar contemplation about the perils of 2004 Iraq. In the album’s think piece, “S Lazy H,” Corb laments the loss of ranching life in a cowboy folk song that showcases his lyrical command and manages to make a five-minute-plus track seem too short. **JIM CASEY**



LOST IN THEIR MOMENT

RAY SCOTT AND
STACEY BEARD
EXCHANGE
WEDDING VOWS
IN A RUSTIC
KENTUCKY
SETTING



Ray Scott and wife Stacey Beard celebrated their nuptials in a rustic but nonetheless incredibly elegant setting at the Lost River Cave in Bowling Green, Ky. Hard to say which was sweeter—the yummy cake or the precious wedding kiss.



Ray Scott claims he knew after one date with Stacey Beard that she would someday be his wife. Turns out “someday” came on Sunday, Sept. 13, just 10 months after that first date.

The couple said “I do” at the Lost River Cave in Bowling Green, Ky., surrounded by friends and family. The couple picked the location to give themselves and their guests a little something out of the norm to enjoy on their special day. “We were looking around for a place that was rustic and a very natural outdoor setting,” the “My Kind of Music” singer tells *Nash Country Weekly*. “We ran across it, and we both thought it was really cool the way it looked. We went down and visited the place, and it just seemed right for us. It was really cool.”

Ray says his new bride played a big part in every detail of the wedding, from planning the event to choosing the gifts given to the guests in attendance. “Stacey is a bigtime D.I.Y. person,” Ray says. “She made all the props and all the decor and everything we had out there. It was all really unique.”

“In hindsight, on the biggest day of [our lives], maybe I could’ve pulled back some, but I loved it,” adds Stacey with laughter. “It was the perfect reflection of us. We wanted a unique location that was a destination that people hadn’t been to. How many people have a wedding and reception in a *cave*? It ended up being so beautiful.”

During the ceremony, emotions were running high for both Ray and Stacey. “When I saw her for the first time, I thought, ‘Holy sh*t!’” blurts Ray with a boisterous laugh. “She was just stunning, obviously.”

They each wrote their own vows, which they shared in front of the most important people in their lives. While Ray never gets jitters performing in front of crowds at his shows, he admits his knees were shaking at that moment. “It was probably the most nervous I’ve been in 10

years,” he says, smiling at his wife. “It was cool, though. It was a special moment I’ll never forget.”

Following the ceremony, friends, family and the just-married couple enjoyed music by the NashVegas All Stars, whose sets eventually turned into a jam session for the numerous musicians present at the party. “You never knew who was going to be playing the guitar at any given time,” says Stacey. “It turned into a great musical event for us.”

For their first dance, Ray penned a song called “The Cowboy,” which added an extra layer of emotion for the newlyweds. “He really outdid himself on that one,” says Stacey, beaming. “I can hardly listen to it and not cry! It’s so beautiful.”

“There were just so many of those moments throughout the entire day,” she continues. “There were so many minutes that we would just sit there and get lost. There were a lot of people there, but at times, it was just us. It was perfect.”

Ray and Stacey enjoyed a mini-honeymoon to Sedona, Ariz., following their nuptials, but are looking forward to a bigger honeymoon in 2016, when they will head to Hawaii. If their whirlwind romance and dating history is any indication, there won’t be any procrastinating on getting their trip itinerary in order. “From the very beginning with Stacey on our first date, I just kind of knew right away that she was special,” Ray says. “I don’t think I can really pinpoint anything in particular. It’s not like she qualified on some checklist that I have or something like that. When you know, you know. I’m not really one to drag my feet when it comes to something like that. There’s no sense in wasting time. And it’s all working out the way it was supposed to be.”

ALANNA CONAWAY

Joe Nichols

FIRST CONCERT

George Strait and Patty Loveless in 1989.

FIRST SCHOOL-YARD FIGHT

In St. Louis in grade school, with a kid named Marcus. I beat him pretty good. My second one didn't go so well. A kid named Eric, he hit pretty hard.

FIRST DATE

Prom, 1993, I think I was 16. I was a sophomore with a cheerleader who was a senior. I was scared to death because I only had like \$80.

FIRST DRINK

When I started playing clubs at 18 or 19, my tour manager poured me a cup of Crown Royal to loosen me up onstage. That was the beginning of a long-term relationship.

FIRST TIME YOU HEARD YOURSELF ON THE RADIO

In 2002, I heard "The Impossible" on a local Nashville station while I was at my record label, Universal South. It gave me chills.

FIRST KISS

Mona. I was 5 or 6 years old in kindergarten.

FIRST TIME YOU LEFT HOME

I was 17, left Rogers [Arkansas], quit school and moved to Fort Smith. I lived in a warehouse so I could start a band.

FIRST CAR

A 1969 white Chevy pickup. I ran it right into the side of a gas station when the brake booster went out. Paid \$700 for it. It lasted a month.

FIRST SONG YOU LEARNED TO PLAY ON GUITAR

"Old Habits" [by Hank Williams Jr.], because it was an easy D chord that my dad taught me when I was 4 or 5 years old.

FIRST MUSIC TEACHER

Mrs. Ross in second or third grade in St. Louis.

FIRST TATTOO

The "H" for my wife Heather on the back of my neck. She branded me right before we got married.



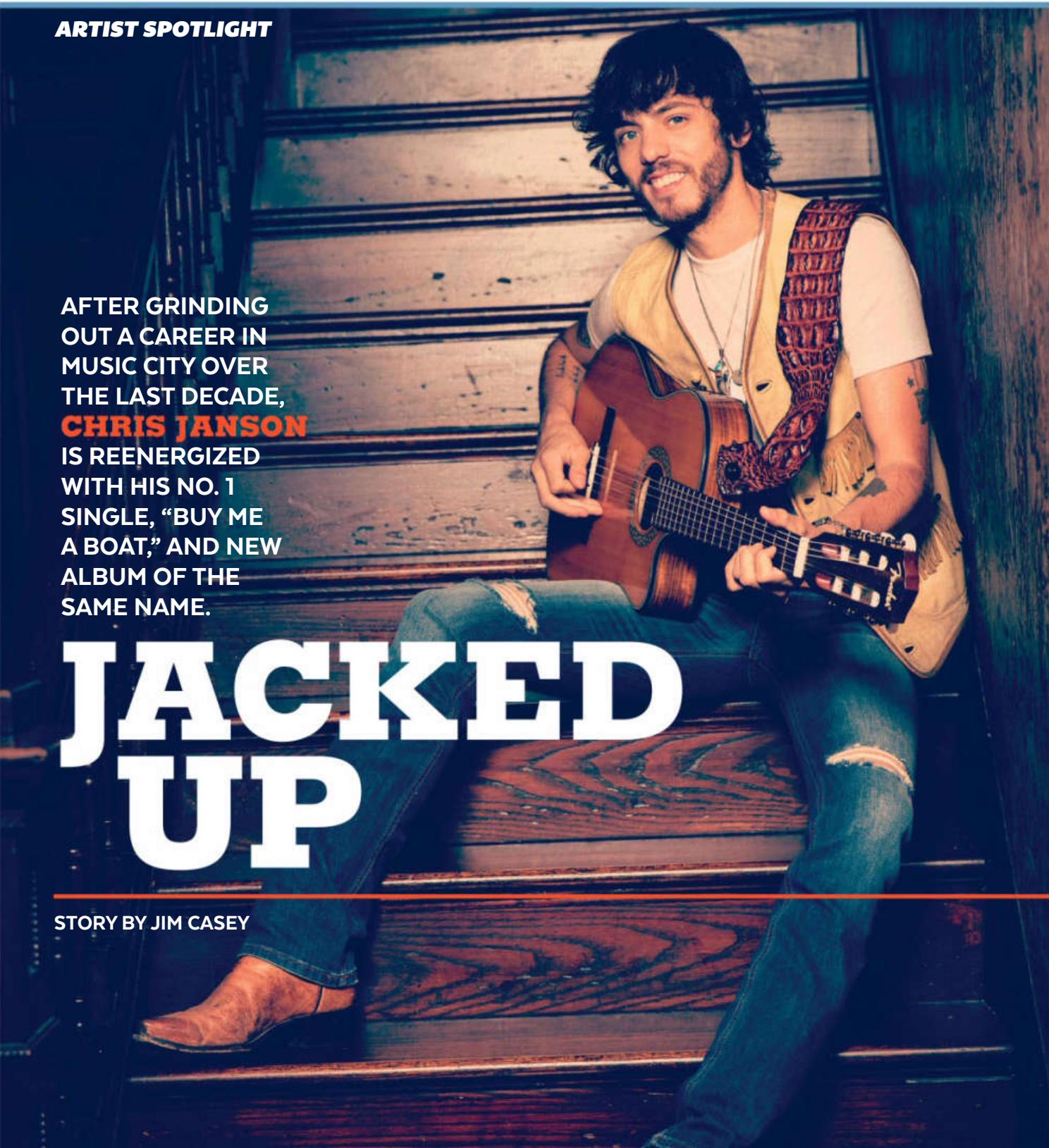
NASH NEXT

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

AFTER GRINDING OUT A CAREER IN MUSIC CITY OVER THE LAST DECADE, **CHRIS JANSON** IS REENERGIZED WITH HIS NO. 1 SINGLE, "BUY ME A BOAT," AND NEW ALBUM OF THE SAME NAME.

JACKED UP

STORY BY JIM CASEY





When Chris Janson's publicist suggested meeting Chris and his wife, Kelly, at a Starbucks in Franklin, Tenn., on a rainy fall afternoon that just happened to be National Coffee Day, it seemed like an agreeable idea. Turns out, if there's one guy in the world who doesn't need any more caffeine in his system, it's Chris.

Right on cue at noon, Chris pops through the Starbucks door—smiling, bright-eyed, arms and legs flailing about like the Scarecrow from the Wizard of Oz. Scruffy-faced and shaggy-headed, the 29-year-old is built straight up and down, and it appears the stiff breeze from the outside shower might scatter him like a maple tree's helicopter seeds, but he roots down without incident at a nearby table. Chris can relax for 30 minutes, or can he?

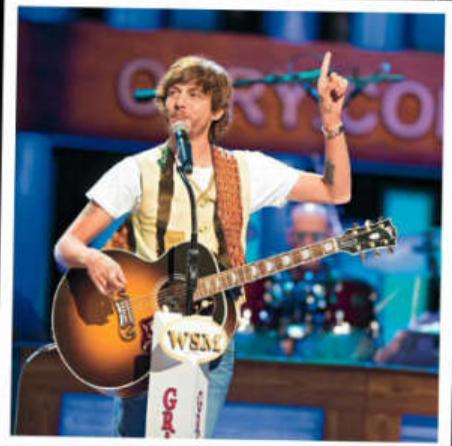
Frappuccinos, iced coffees and pumpkin lattes abound, but Chris won't be drinking any of that stuff today. He's content to sip on the can of Mountain Dew in hand, his sixth, yes, sixth of the young day. Chris gave up drinking alcohol in 2009. Now, he consumes "about 12 Dews a day," says his wife. When you crunch the numbers, that comes to more than 4,300 cans of Mountain Dew per year. That's a lot of, well, anything.

"I'm addicted, completely," says Chris as he tips the can back. "I've had six today. Slamming 'em. It ain't even lunchtime. They don't do a thing for me. I just love the taste. I could quit if I wanted to. I just don't want to. That sounds like a good song title."

While Chris won't ever be mistaken for Hemingway, he

DREAM WEAVER

"I've played the Grand Old Opry 112 times. It never gets old. It's the greatest achievement ever. When I came to town, it was one of my goals. I've done it, and then some. I'm living my dream. On the radio? Doing it. Playing in front of big crowds? Doing it. Album coming out? Doing it."



(Above) Chris Janson (center) and wife Kelly join Warner Music Nashville president John Esposito at the 2015 CMT Music Awards in Nashville in June; (below left) Chris takes the stage, with Mountain Dew in hand, at the Jamboree in the Hills in Morristown, Ohio, in July.



"To break through the mold and have a No. 1 song is unbelievable. Until you get one, you don't realize how big it is."

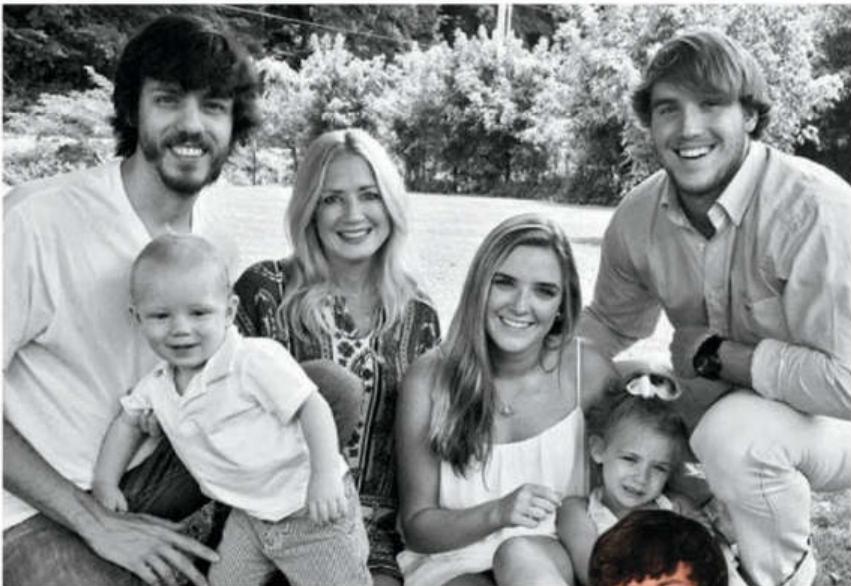
has a Hemingwayan manner of succinctly and directly stating what's on his mind—and for that matter, what he writes in his songs. If you need more proof than his initial thoughts on Mountain Dew, take, for instance, the second verse of his recent Mediabase No. 1 song "Buy Me a Boat": *They call me redneck, white trash and blue collar.* That's the full spectrum of countrified descriptors in nine words.

"We live in a world where we try to pretty things up so much that they aren't that real anymore," says Chris. "I have a hard time doing that, personally. Take the songwriting and artistry out of it, if I wasn't doing that for a living, I'd still be the kind of guy who wears his heart on his sleeve. I call it like it is."

Straight talk. Not only is Chris pleased to do it, but he's also pleased that someone is now listening. After mov-

ing to Nashville from Perryville, Mo.—a town of less than 9,000—11 years ago, Chris has been through the proverbial Music City wringer. For more than a decade, Chris labored away onstage at Lower Broadway clubs and in writers' rooms, co-penning songs such as Tim McGraw's "Truck Yeah" (see sidebar) and Justin Moore's "Off the Beaten Path." He signed a couple of not-so-successful record deals with BNA Records in 2009 and Bigger Picture Music Group in 2013, dropping two EPs along the way that didn't make much of a splash, before self-releasing "Buy Me a Boat" in early 2015. The strength of that song netted him a deal with Warner Bros., leading to his debut album, also titled *Buy Me a Boat*, which is slated to drop on Oct. 30.

"It's been a long ride," says Chris. "Eleven years ago, I was



(Above from left) Chris, son Jesse Bo, wife Kelly, stepdaughter Chel, daughter Georgia Bella and stepson Graham; (right) Kelly and Chris at the 2015 CMT Music Awards in Nashville; (below) Chris trades licks with singer/songwriter Rhett Akins.



playing four shows a day, four hours apiece, at Tootsie's [Orchid Lounge]. I built myself from the ground up. I lived in the backseat of a two-door Monte Carlo that my dad still drives today. That was 11 years ago when all I had was a dream."

Now, Chris can take solace in the fact that he's actually fulfilling his dream—a debut album on a major label. The 11-song offering, on which Chris wrote or co-wrote every song, is a roller coaster of rowdy, rural fun coupled with contemplative ballads. The album's second single, "Power of Positive Drinking," follows

in the good-timing footstep of "Buy Me a Boat," while songs like "Under the Sun" and "Where You Come In" showcase a pensive, sensitive side of Chris that may come as a shock to those who only know him for "Buy Me a Boat."

Chris' pensive, sensitive side also manifests itself in another spot on the album—all of the people he thanked in the album notes. It's two-plus pages of heartfelt thank-you notes to more than 30 people, including Jesus, Kelly, his kids, parents, in-laws, brother, songwriters, friends,

TIM, YEAH

Not only did Tim McGraw take "Truck Yeah," a song Chris Janson co-penned, to No. 10 on the *Billboard* Country Airplay chart in 2012, but he's also featured on Chris' new album, *Buy Me a Boat*. Tim and Chris trade vocals on "Messin' With Jesus," a song Chris co-wrote with his wife Kelly and Pavel Dovgalyuk.

"I just asked Tim to do it, and he was there," says Chris. "Tim has been such a huge advocate in my corner. He's recorded my songs, which I'm so thankful for, because that provides for my family, which is huge. He talked about 'Buy Me a Boat' every day it was on the charts, just bragging about it. He's been an amazing friend."

the Warner Bros. team and more.

"I wanted it to be longer," Chris says. "I had to whittle it down some. But man, I didn't want to leave anyone out. I'm truly so grateful for the opportunities that I've had. I've had a lot of people in my corner—a lot of very specific, strategic people. It's very important to recognize the people who helped get you there. I probably left some out, so forgive me for that. But, man, there are a lot of people to thank. It wasn't just about me. It's about the team. And there was a big team effort out there



"Since 'Buy Me a Boat,' I've gone from playing for several hundred people to several thousand onstage."

fighting for me, for sure."

One thing Chris didn't have to fight for was an invite to join Luke Bryan on his annual Farm Tour. In fact, Chris is about to hop on a bus for the eight-show tour that will visit rural towns—such as Starkville, Miss., and McCalla, Ala.—for a throwdown of countrified proportions.

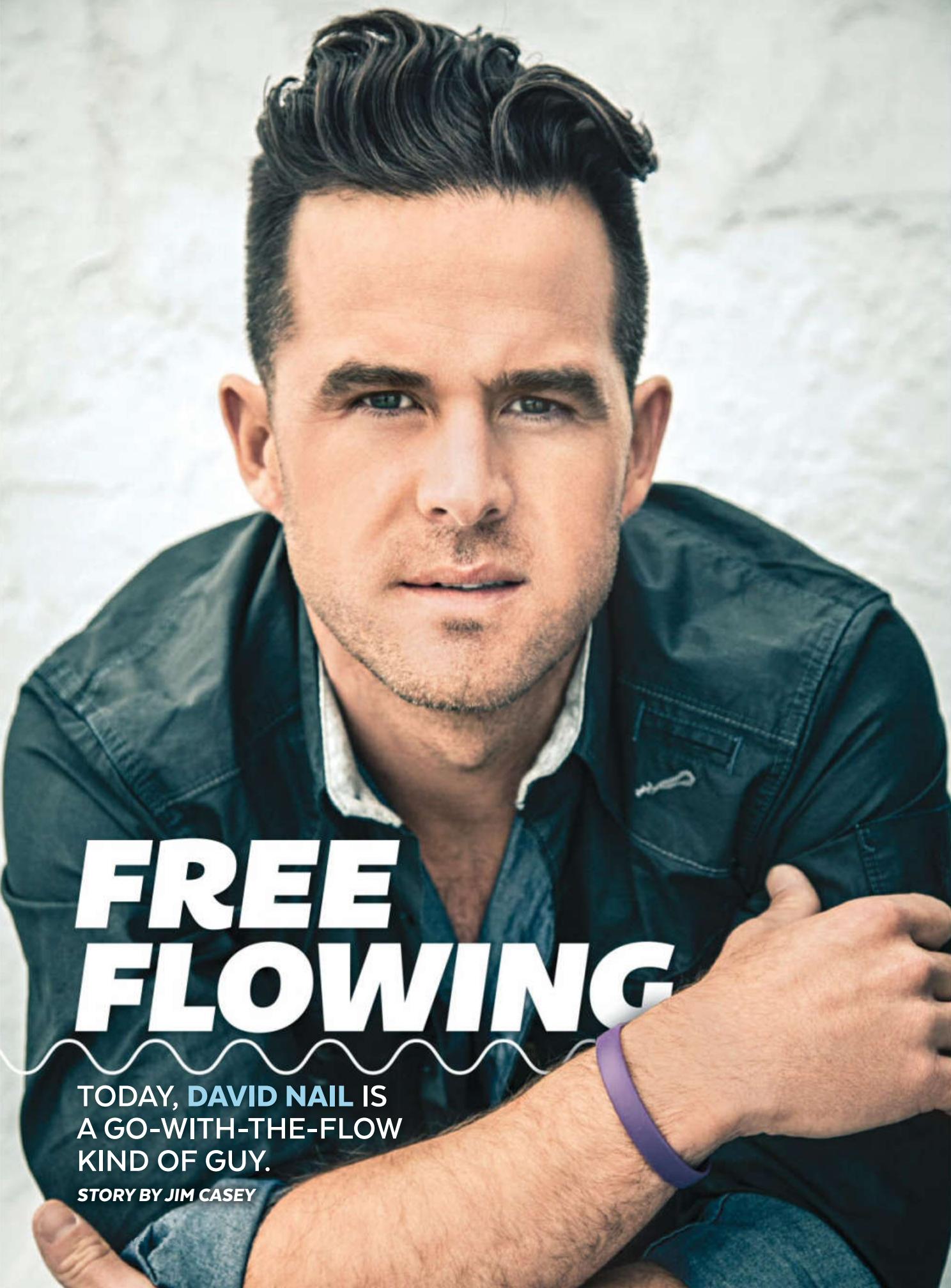
"We leave for Farm Tour in a few hours, and I'm more than ready for it," says Chris. "I've got a couple of favorites in country music as far as stars are concerned, and Luke is one of them, [Tim] McGraw is one

of them, [Keith] Urban is one. It was really cool for Luke to invite me out with him. He obviously could have picked anyone, so the fact that he invited me to be a part of it is a big deal. We're actually playing at a farm in Adel, Georgia, which is where Kelly is from, so that's even cooler."

While Chris would probably be content to sit here and continue talking about life, liberty and his pursuit of happiness, he needs to get home and pack for Farm Tour, plus, he finished his Mountain Dew five minutes ago and it's

time to go get number seven. After he says his goodbyes, Chris tumbleweeds out the door as akimbo as he came in. When he gets 20 feet down the sidewalk, he stops, turns around in the pouring rain and points to the corner of Main St. and 5th Ave, screaming, "This is where I asked Kelly to marry me. Put that in your story. People love that kind of stuff." He spins back around, walks five more feet before turning one last time. "By the way, she said 'Yes.'"

It seems like a lot more people are saying "yes" to Chris now. ■



FREE FLOWING

TODAY, DAVID NAIL IS
A GO-WITH-THE-FLOW
KIND OF GUY.

STORY BY JIM CASEY

MISSOURI NATIVE DAVID NAIL

is sitting in a *Nash Country Weekly* office on an early fall afternoon, checking his phone to see if his St. Louis Cardinals can overcome a late-inning deficit and beat divisional rival Chicago Cubs. On the ride over, David was listening to the game on the radio. But now the zealous Cardinals fan is stuck in an interview room at the mercy of his PR responsibilities.

David puts his phone in his pocket, clapping his hands together like a blackjack dealer to show there's nothing in his clutches. He's ready to talk. No interruptions. But, there's a knowing look from one baseball fan to another—David would very much appreciate a hasty conversation so he can get back to his Cardinals.

David is not just a go-with-the-flow kind of guy “today,” as in this particular Wednesday. “Nowadays” seems a more fitting descriptor. After battling depression for a decade, the 36-year-old country crooner finally sought help in the form of therapy a few years ago. Nowadays, David is glass-half-full.

“I was chronically depressed for about 10 years,” he begins. “Now I go to counseling and take quite a bit of medicine, but [the difference is] night and day, man. I had a bunch of stuff pent up for a lot of years and didn’t know exactly why or what it was, but just being able to talk to somebody consistently who has a background in helping people—it’s remarkable.”

His newfound go-with-the-flow mentality manifested itself earlier this summer when Little Big Town was forced to postpone their Pain Killer Tour for seven weeks so band member Jimi Westbrook could recover from vocal cord surgery. David was slated to open those shows, but instead of boohooing the lost opportunity—and revenue—the baseball junkie packed his bags for his own stadium tour, sans any music.

“I’ve been to more baseball games this year than I ever have,” says David. “After the Little Big Town tour got canceled, I went to as many



(Above) David Nail (right) hangs with St. Louis Cardinals third baseman Matt Carpenter (center) and TCU head baseball coach Jim Schlossnagle at Busch Stadium; (left) as part of MLB All-Star Game weekend, David played in the Celebrity Softball Game, where he was named co-MVP; (below) David shows his support for the Memphis Redbirds, the Triple-A minor league affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals.



stadiums as I could. I went to L.A. to see the Dodgers, saw a couple games in Kansas City, a couple in Boston, a couple in St. Louis and then a couple in Philly and Baltimore. I’ve made it a goal to go to two new stadiums a year, so Philly and L.A. were my two new ones this year.”

With October playoff baseball on the brain, David doesn’t sound like a man too concerned with talking about his new music. In fact, at the beginning of 2015, David wasn’t even thinking about new music. But here he is 10 months later with a new single, “Night’s on Fire,” and a new album—tentatively titled *Fighter*—slated for an early 2016 release.

“After Christmas last year, I wanted to get as far away from music as possible,” says David. “I was having some voice issues toward the end of the year, it was getting cold and I just wasn’t feeling like I was at 100 percent. It was playing with my head a little bit. I was tired and a lot of my guys were tired. We were playing a minimum of four shows a week toward the end of 2014, with lots of miles in between. We were just hammering away. I was missing my friends and family, and my grandmother had passed away. There were just a lot of variables that made me feel like I wanted to be stationary for a couple of months.”

THERAPEUTIC POWERS

"People ask me advice all the time," says David, "and I tell them, 'Man, you need to go to counseling,' and they look at me like, 'Jeez, you don't know anything about me.' But having someone objective in your life is the best. When I bottomed out and decided to go get help, I didn't think anything about what other people would think. I was just tired of being miserable, but man, the people who come up to me and thank me for not making them feel bad or ashamed, it's overwhelming. There are a lot of people skeptical about revealing that they are getting help, but once I came out and unloaded that off my chest, I decided I wanted to tell everyone."



DAVID NAIL CONTINUED

But then, one of those worldview moments—where you could look at the glass as half full or half empty—occurred. In January, David's phone started alerting him to upcoming co-writes he had scheduled months earlier, many with writers he had never worked with. He was exhausted but intrigued. Instead of canceling and taking a much-needed break, he went ahead with the meetings, determined to let his mind flow freely. His glass-half-full mentality was in full force.

"We went in and wrote two songs—one called 'Fighter' [Troy Verges and Scooter Carusoe] and one called 'Home' [Barry Dean and Lori McKenna]—that fired me up pretty good and recharged my batteries overnight," says David. "And so I went to my producer, Frank Liddell, and said, 'Hey, I know we are nowhere close to making an album, but can we go in and record three or four things just for fun?' He said, 'Absolutely,' and scheduled the dates. We found a few more songs,



including 'Night's on Fire,' the single, and 'Good Tonight,' that Brothers Osborne wrote. So we had four or five really strong songs, and once the label found out what we were doing, they were in the mindset where they thought it was kinda pointless to go in the studio unless we were going to record an album. They asked me if I had enough material to make an album, and I said, 'Sure,' but I was talking out of my rear. However, by the end of the recording session, I could

have made two or three records. I had 20 or 30 songs on hold that were all really strong, with four or five that I wrote that didn't make the record. So it was definitely spur-of-the-moment, but once it started, it snowballed out of control to the point where we were recording and mixing and overdubbing and doing vocals. February, March and April are just a blur."

The end result is David's fourth studio record, one that he dubs his "lovemaking album."

"Every song had some sort of love-making reference, some are slight, others are all about it," says David, as he pulls out his phone so he can read off all of the album's song titles and writers. "Even the sad songs talk about it. We're either about to be doing it, doing it or we just got done doing it."

And now that his phone is out, David can't help but check the score of the game. His Cardinals scored three runs in the bottom of the eighth and held off the Cubs for a 4-3 win. That sounds like a guy whose free-flowing mentality runneth over. **NCW**

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The 49th annual CMA Awards will be—like every previous year—stuffed full of performances from country's hottest artists in addition to the honors. Predicting the results at every CMA Awards is sort of like predicting the weather, in that even educated guesses are sometimes wrong, but we've gone ahead and made some bold predictions nonetheless. Tune in to see how well we fared when the CMA Awards airs Nov. 4 at 8 p.m. ET on ABC.

STAKES

MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

ERIC CHURCH ▶

After five consecutive wins by Blake Shelton, it's time for an "outside" voice in this category. Over the last year, Eric "The Outsider" Church has continued to showcase his versatility with singles "Talladega" and "Like a Wrecking Ball," as well as his duet with Keith Urban on "Raise 'Em Up." And for that, he'll be raising up the trophy.

SHOULD WIN

CHRIS STAPLETON ▶

JON FREEMAN: It's very curious that Chris, virtually a new artist to country radio listeners, scored himself a



nomination in this category among country's superstar dudes. But that is the raw power of this Kentucky native's voice—a gritty, hair-raising howl that can sing literally anything and make it sound amazing. In terms

of pure vocal ability, Chris is second to none.

BLAKE SHELTON ▶

JIM CASEY: Forget about what's going on in Blake's personal life and focus on the fact that this dude cranks out

hits like he's Babe Ruth. In the past year, "Lonely Tonight" and "Sangria" have both climbed to the top, and his current single, "Gonna," is on the way. When Blake lends his singing chops to a tune, the smart money says it's going to No. 1.

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

LUKE BRYAN ▶

There was a time when it seemed like Entertainer of the Year was always won in machine-gun-like succession, but no one has enjoyed back-to-back wins since Kenny Chesney won three in a row from 2006–2008. Look for that to change this year when Luke, the defending Entertainer of the Year, takes home the trophy thanks to his *Kill the Lights* album with its back-to-back *Billboard* No. 1 singles and monster trifecta of his Kill the Lights Tour, Spring Break Party and Farm Tour.

SHOULD WIN

GARTH BROOKS ▶

TAMMY RAGUSA: He wrote the book on entertaining, even though he credits Chris LeDoux as the inspiration behind his high-energy shows. But on his own, Garth Brooks continues to dominate the world of touring, selling out not one, but 10 shows in Chicago, within min-



utes of each show being announced. He then continued that pattern at major venues in multiple cities across the U.S. That's the reason the new guys still point to Garth as the premier entertainer in country music.

KENNY CHESNEY ▶

JIM CASEY: Yes, it's been seven years since Kenny took home the trophy, but the fact that George Strait earned a nostalgic nod in 2013—more than two decades after his last one—set a precedent

for coming back to the winner's circle after getting sent out to pasture. Only a handful of country crooners can sell out a stadium tour, and 47-year-old Kenny just happens to be one of them. In fact, 120,000-plus folks showed up for his show at Gillette Stadium during his Big Revival Tour, which routinely drew more than 50,000 people each night. Couple that with another *Billboard* No. 1 album and four consecutive No. 1 singles, and you've got something sweeter than Yoo-Hoo: Mr. Kenny Chesney.

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

CARRIE UNDERWOOD ▶

If it were based on vocal ability alone, Carrie Underwood would be a no-brainer. During the eligibility period, this

powerhouse singer landed her 14th No. 1 single, "Something in the Water" and a No. 2 follow-up with "Little Toy Guns," performed at U2's World Aids Day concert

and HBO and Starbucks' Concert for Valor, earned four Primetime Emmy nominations for *The Sound of Music*, released a greatest-hits album, recorded the *Sunday Night Football* theme song for the third season and released "Smoke Break," the first single from her new album, *Storyteller*. Oh yeah, she also gave birth to baby Isaiah in February. Smoke that!

SHOULD WIN

◀ KACEY MUSGRAVES

BOB PAXMAN: This is my "Should Win" pick for the category, but I think she could also take the prize in a somewhat stunning upset. Kacey has proven herself as a songwriter with a unique narrative

voice, often offering up witty and insightful perspectives on small-town life. She's also the best purveyor of her own material. Kacey does seem to be an insider industry favorite, if not always the darling of radio, so it's possible that she could hear her name called the night of Nov. 4.

KACEY MUSGRAVES

TAMMY RAGUSA: Pure and effortless in her delivery and unapologetic in her content, Kacey Musgraves became a critic and fan favorite with her 2013 album, *Same Trailer Different Park*. With 2015's *Pageant Material*, she seemed to cement her place in country music with fun and thought-provoking songs—and more thumbing her nose





VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

► LITTLE BIG TOWN

NCW's editorial staff unanimously agreed that we've got a girl (and guy) crush on Little Big Town to repeat this win for the fourth consecutive year.

VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE ►

The bro-country moment may be waning, but our favorite poster bros have kept a truck bed of hits and sold-out headlining shows that far outstrips the competition.

SHOULD WIN

FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE

BOB PAXMAN: For the record, my choice as best duo of the year isn't even nominated: the formidable Striking Matches. But among those who are eligible, Florida Georgia Line seems the obvious and most deserving choice. They've ramped up their game in all areas, particularly songwriting and live performing. Maddie & Tae could give them a run, but they appear to be a "wait 'til next year" contender.

MADDIE & TAE ►

JON FREEMAN: For the mind-boggling achievement of being female artists who hit No. 1 with a song making fun of most of the other songs hitting No. 1, and being so unabashedly country with their playful, whip-smart debut album *Start Here*, Maddie Marlow and Tae Dye probably deserve a Nobel prize, but some CMA hardware would suffice.



NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR



WILL WIN

SAM HUNT ▲

With his irresistible, '90s R&B-indebted grooves and tales of small-town drama, Sam Hunt owned 2015 even as he challenged notions of what country music could be. His full-length debut, *Montevallo*, has scarcely spent a day outside the Top 5 of *Billboard's* Top Country Albums chart since it was released. In terms of commercial breakthrough, no one comes close.

SHOULD WIN

SAM HUNT

JON FREEMAN: Say what you will about his urban influences and futuristic production, Sam Hunt was on a screaming rocket ship for Mars this year and definitely wears a flat-brim hat better than Matt Damon.

KELSEA BALLERINI ▼

BOB PAXMAN: True, Sam Hunt has scored more hits, but Kelsea made a significant breakthrough for female artists with her No. 1, "Love Me Like You Mean It." Kelsea will garner plenty of votes for changing the radio culture. She's also likely to be perceived as more country than the other nominees.



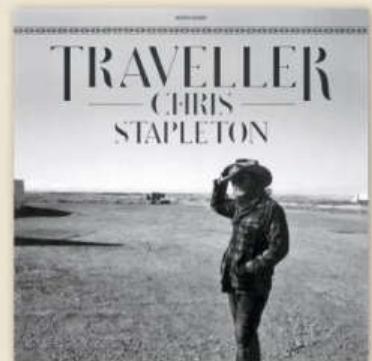
ALBUM OF THE YEAR

WILL WIN

TRAVELLER

CHRIS STAPLETON ▼

You won't find any No. 1 singles attached to *Traveller*, but you will find 12 songs that take listeners on a journey of varying speeds, bookended by the optimistic title track that starts the trip and the live recording of "Sometimes I Cry," which serves as the road-weary destination point. In between, *Traveller* is full of hard drinking ("Whiskey and You"), good women ("More of You") and bad choices ("Nobody to Blame") that highlight Chris' compelling songwriting, musicianship and vocals.



SHOULD WIN

TRAVELLER

CHRIS

STAPLETON

JIM CASEY:

He may not be a household

name, but mention "Chris Stapleton" to anyone in Nashville who's in the know, and you'll get a series of adjectival superlatives, starting with a voice that's as dark and gritty and beautiful as a slab of coal from his home state of Kentucky. With *Traveller*, Chris announced his presence to the rest of the country: here's a complete concept album that kicks ass from start to finish.

THE BIG REVIVAL

KENNY CHESNEY ▼

TAMMY RAGUSA: The good ones know what they're good at and gradually evolve, making subtle



tweaks to their product until they achieve perfection. That's pretty much what Kenny Chesney has done his entire career. *The Big Revival*, with its four No. 1

singles, is everything we would want from a Kenny collection, and it's absolutely his best . . . at least until he releases the next one. **NCW**



THE WORLD AWAITS

↔ • ↔

Carrie Underwood takes stories of crime, infidelity and love to a global audience on her new album.

↔ • ↔

STORY BY JON FREEMAN

In Carrie Underwood's latest single, "Smoke Break," there are descriptions of a single mom and a hardworking man who just need a momentary break from the stress that constantly floods their lives. It doesn't say anything about the rigors of being a global entertainer, but maybe that part is implied: Carrie just returned from London (the one in England), where she represented country music at the Apple Music Festival streaming event. Before launching into the media blitz for her new album, *Storyteller*, she managed to take her own "Smoke Break" at home with husband Mike Fisher and son Isaiah.



photo by Randee St. Nicholas/Schmidt Relations



“IT’S SOMETHING THAT COUNTRY MUSIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN DOING, TELLING STORIES. I LOVE A GOOD STORY SONG.”

“Last night we went and sat out on the porch,” explains Carrie, seated at one end of a long conference table in her record label’s Nashville office. “I was like, when’s the last time we sat on the porch? It was a nice sunset. It was a nice temperature outside. Me and Mike and Isaiah—we have rocking chairs. We went and just sat there. Like, I haven’t been in this rocking chair in forever. And that’s sad, because we weren’t out there long—maybe like 20 minutes—but it was so nice.”

It could very well be the last break she’ll get for awhile. On Nov. 4, right after *Storyteller* makes its debut, Carrie will co-host the CMA Awards with Brad Paisley for the eighth consecutive year, and then the holiday sales season arrives. In March, she will head back to the British Isles to headline the C2C Music Festival, which has now expanded to three nights with shows in London, Dublin and Glasgow.

Carrie’s ballooning global popularity is worth examining, because she’s one of a very small handful of country artists who can take her show across the Atlantic and still draw large crowds. While many of her contemporaries can sell out the big arenas on home soil, very few are getting the calls to play huge international events like Apple Music Festival, which was available to anyone with an Apple device. In other words, millions of folks could have been—and likely were—watching.

“I tried not to think about the cameras too much, but occasionally it would pop in my head, like, theoretically, all around the world people could be watching right now,” says Carrie. “And to be [on] the first country night they’ve ever had, that was pretty awesome. I hope they enjoyed working with us and next year they’ll be like, ‘You know, those country folk were so awesome, and it went really well, so let’s invite some more back.’”



Cameras be damned, Carrie gave a typically laser-precise performance, pleasing the crowd with everything from the metallic chords of "Cowboy Casanova" to the searching spirituality of "Something in the Water." Not content to have it be a rote recitation of hits, Carrie even inserted a verse of Wiz Khalifa's "See You Again" into her song of the same name. It was a savvy move for the global, multicultural audience watching, even if hearing Carrie rap was a little jarring.

"I would make a great DJ, being able to mash things up, because I can sing songs to other people's songs left and right," she reveals. "When I heard that [song] came out I was like, hmm, it's the same title. I listened to it, I was like, this would totally work. Then I was like, now I have to *rap*? So yeah, we made it work."

Unfortunately, the five-day trip didn't leave Carrie much time to go sightseeing or even have more than one sit-down restaurant meal while she was there. Part of that was due to the hectic nature of the trip—rehearsing and talking to media—but the bigger part of it was just wanting to get back to her son. This was the longest she'd been away from him since his birth in late February.

"I had to search myself and be like, 'OK, what's best for him, and not me being selfish and wanting to have him there with me?' That was leaving him here," she says. "My in-laws came down and helped my husband so I know he was extremely well taken care of but it was hard. I had been away from him one night previous."

Carrie deals with those kinds of real-life struggles on *Storyteller*, which continues a tradition Carrie began back when she arrived in Nashville fresh from the *American Idol* stage and immediately became one of country's top female artists. Her earliest hits from debut album *Some Hearts*, "Jesus, Take the Wheel" and "Before He Cheats," cemented the narrative style that would become a hallmark of her music and translate to those global audiences. It's a recurring pattern in Carrie's hits: the hungover heroine of "Last Name," the abuse victim in "Blown Away" and the embattled child in "Little Toy Guns."

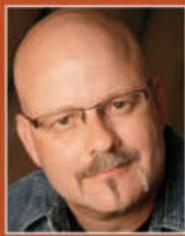
"It's something that country music has always been doing, telling stories," agrees Carrie. "But I think it's something that I personally gravitate towards. I love a good story song."

In the case of "Smoke Break," Carrie uses a surprisingly twangy country-rock arrangement to underscore the idea of holding onto personal values. It sticks out sonically, particularly at a time when productions are trending toward more electronic and pop instrumentation, but it's also significant for adding some stakes to the glut of radio singles about carefree living.

"The do-what-feels-good mentality—that's just not real life," she says. "People struggle, people are trying to work and trying to take care of their families. That's real and that's what country music's been about at the core of it. Sometimes you just need to cut yourself a

MEET THE PRODUCERS

Carrie worked with three producers on *Storyteller*—Mark Bright, Jay Joyce and Zach Crowell. Each has his own distinct approach to making records and brings something different out of Carrie.



MARK BRIGHT

Carrie's longtime collaborator Mark has been present since *Some Hearts* came out years ago, and she shares his "scheduled and organized" approach to getting things done.

OTHER WORK: Rascal Flatts, Scotty McCreery

CARRIE SAYS: "Mark and I work so well together. But I feel like I've seen a lot with some other artists where I feel like they end up making the same album over and over again a little bit because they do work with all the same people. There's a loyalty aspect and I'm as loyal as they come."



JAY JOYCE

Rock-minded rebel Jay had never worked with Carrie before *Storyteller*, but produced "Smoke Break" and five other tracks.

OTHER WORK: Eric Church, Little Big Town

CARRIE SAYS: "One of my biggest fears as an artist is getting stuck and making the same things or the same kinds of things. So I thought, it's now or never. I need to mess my world up. Jay is on fire right now and I have the tendency to skew a little rockish in things that I like and he's really good at that. He was about polar opposite as far as the space and the way that he works as Mark Bright is. There's just this big open space, this big open room he records in, his church studio. It was just good for me."



ZACH CROWELL

Emerging songwriting/producing talent Zach has had a hand in some of the biggest records of the year, and co-wrote three songs on *Storyteller* in addition to producing two.

OTHER WORK: Sam Hunt, Keith Urban

CARRIE SAYS: "His name was popping up all over things that I was holding, and we wrote well together. It was like, it just kind of makes sense. I keep picking things that he's doing one way or another, so why not take an extra step and go into the studio with him?"

THE SONGS OF **STORYTELLER**

1. Renegade Runaway
(CU/Hillary Lindsey/Chris DeStefano)
Producer: Jay Joyce

2. Dirty Laundry
(Zach Crowell/Hillary Lindsey/
Ashley Gorley)
Producer: Jay Joyce

3. Church Bells
(Zach Crowell/Hillary Lindsey/Brett James)
Producer: Mark Bright

4. Heartbeat
(CU/Zach Crowell/Ashley Gorley)
Producer: Zach Crowell

5. Smoke Break
(CU/Hillary Lindsey/Chris DeStefano)
Producer: Jay Joyce

6. Choctaw County Affair
(Jason White)
Producer: Jay Joyce

7. Like I'll Never Love You Again
(Hillary Lindsey/Liz Rose/Lori McKenna)
Producer: Jay Joyce

8. Chaser
(CU/Hillary Lindsey/Mike Elizondo)
Producer: Jay Joyce

9. Relapse
(Brett James/Sara Haze/Ben Caver)
Producer: Zach Crowell

10. Clock Don't Stop
(Hillary Lindsey/Chris DeStefano/
Blair Daly)
Producer: Mark Bright

11. The Girl You Think I Am
(CU/Hillary Lindsey/David Hodges)
Producer: Mark Bright

12. Mexico
(Jamie Moore/Derrick Southerland/
Kat Higgins)
Producer: Mark Bright

**13. What I Never Knew
I Always Wanted**
(CU/Hillary Lindsey/Brett James)
Producer: Mark Bright

CARRIE UNDERWOOD CONTINUED



little slack and deserve to have a second to yourself.”

Another story song helped guide the entire direction for the album when Carrie wasn’t entirely sure what she wanted to do. “Choctaw County Affair,” a minimalist, swampy crime saga that sounds like it could have come straight from Bobbie Gentry’s pen, found its

way to her listening stack. “I was like, that’s it. That’s what I want to build around,” she recalls. “That was the catalyst that led to writing ‘Renegade Runaway.’”

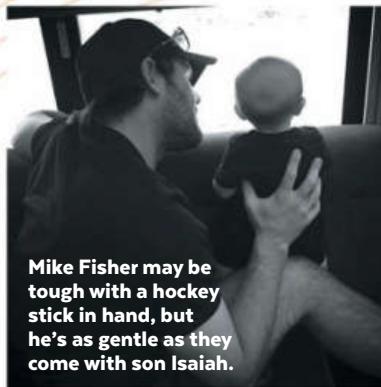
At least two other songs, the frantic “Mexico” and the eerie “Church Bells,” make allusions (if not outright specific references) to some kind of criminal activity, a topic that pops up pretty

BABY ON THE BUS

Carrie and Mike's son, Isaiah, will be a year old in February, and he's finally reaching the age where he can travel with his mom while she's on tour. Currently he's teething and keeping her up nights, but she knows that'll pass.

"We have a bus we've outfitted for a baby. He's got a crib in the bus," she says. "We've mounted our cameras and stuff so we can be up front and he can have his quiet in the back. There's just so much stuff. I don't know how I'm gonna deal with all the stuff that comes with just traveling."

In addition to her own stagewear and clothes, Carrie has to remember all the essentials for Isaiah as well—from his diapers to his toys. "Just getting all of that off and on the bus is a little mind-blowing to me, and I always forget stuff," she admits. "Whenever we leave, I leave things behind. I forget to bring things. It's a mess."



Mike Fisher may be tough with a hockey stick in hand, but he's as gentle as they come with son Isaiah.



frequently in Carrie's songs.

"That's kind of me, right?" Carrie acknowledges with a laugh. "One of my first singles off my first album was 'Before He Cheats.' And 'Blown Away,' we killed people on it. In 'Two Black Cadillacs' and 'Blown Away,' people die!"

It flies in the face of what is assumed about Carrie: she's a small-town Christian girl from Oklahoma who eats a vegan diet. It's downright comical to think she would be capable of hurting anyone, but that's precisely what makes those songs so fascinating for her fans.

"It's exciting to sing about, not to actually do," Carrie says, laughing. "Because I'm the most law-abiding citizen, rule-follower that I know. When we're standing at a crosswalk and there are no cars coming but the little man says don't walk, I don't walk."

Carrie suggests there is another, albeit more practical reason that she likes to write and record these darker songs. "I'm loud and have a tendency to be aggressive in my voice," she admits. "Sometimes it's harder for me

to sing songs that are sweet and quiet and tender. Because I'm loud and I just like being a little more forceful."

At the end of "Mexico," Carrie lets out a stratospheric, piercing scream that punctuates the paranoia and futility of its characters' flight from the country. It's a new way to frame her voice, taking the emotional climax and resolution approach from many of her songs and knocking it off its axis.

"I constantly figure out that I can do things [with my voice] that I didn't know I could do before," she says. "I'm probably gonna be in trouble when I'm old."

Storyteller is not without its lighter moments. Carrie co-wrote two of the album's more tender numbers, "Heartbeat" and "The Girl You Think I Am"—the latter of which sympathetically, humanely portrays a woman who has trouble seeing the good qualities everyone else sees in her.

In the U.K., there's a long tradition of balladry in song dating back to medieval times, extending through the present day even with pop artists like Sam Smith and Adele—both of

whom excel at torchy breakup tunes. Carrie's uncanny ability to find that human story in her songs is part of the same tradition, recalling fellow country troubadours like Garth Brooks, Shania Twain and Dolly Parton, who made the leap over the big pond. In addition to being dynamite performers, their songs were from a similar storytelling tradition.

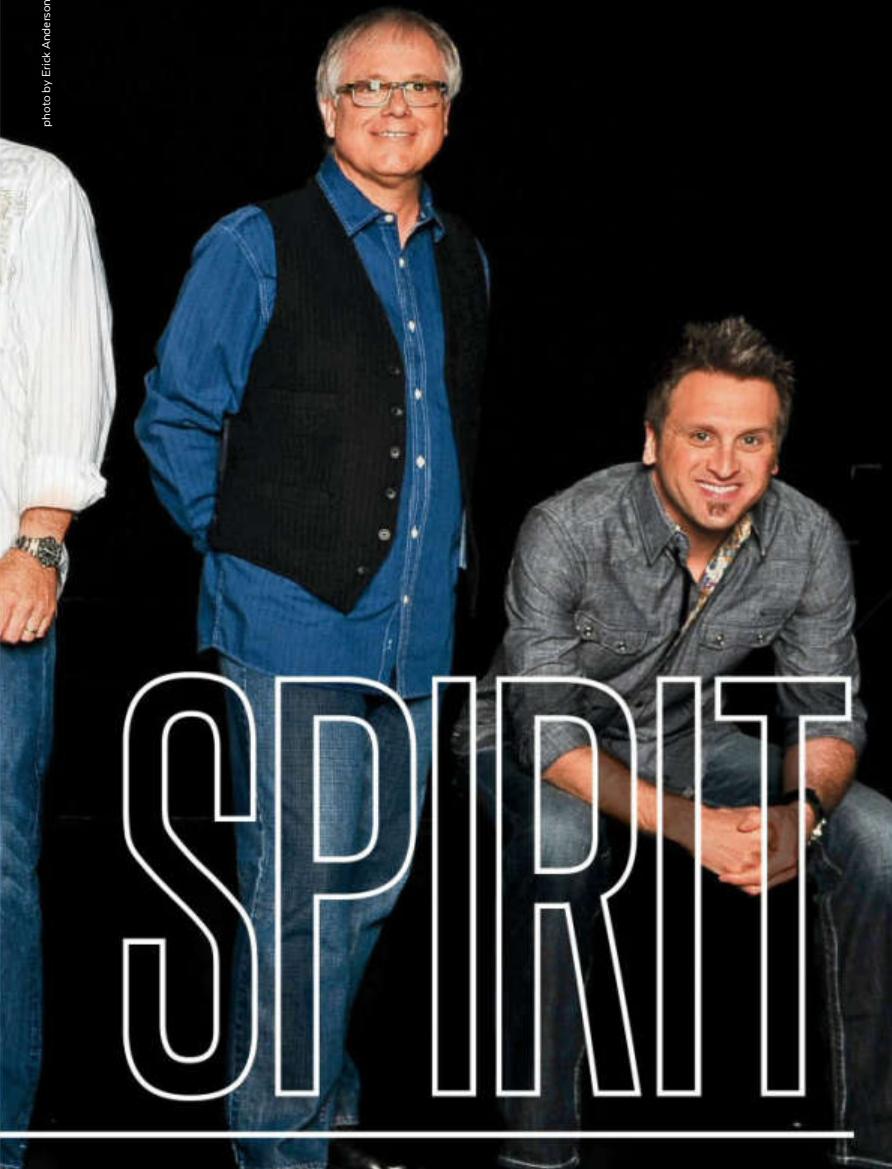
"We've been to Dublin and Belfast and we've played in London a few times. People know every single word to everything," Carrie says. "They're all superfans and excited and they've done their homework."

"It's like when I was living in Oklahoma, we'd have people come through," she adds. "It would be somebody really cool, like, 'Oh, they might never come back again!' I'm from a really small town—Tulsa was the nearest town to us. I was gonna make the most of it. I would go buy any albums I didn't have. I knew every word to every song."

Sounds like a pretty great form of stress relief—Carrie may need it in the months ahead. **NCW**

VOLUNTEER

The Charlie Daniels Band
(from left) Shannon Wickline,
Charlie Hayward, Charlie
Daniels, Pat McDonald, Bruce
Brown and Chris Wormer



SPIRIT

IT'S BEEN A BUSTLING PERIOD FOR **CHARLIE DANIELS** WITH HIS REVIVAL OF VOLUNTEER JAM AND A NEW LIVE ALBUM RECORDED AT BILLY BOB'S TEXAS.

STORY BY BOB PAXMAN

Even as Charlie Daniels pushes the milestone age of 80 (he turned 79 on Oct. 28), he can still enjoy a good party now and then. Heck, he can even let the good times roll until the midnight hour. Not that late nights and loud music are a daily occurrence by any stretch, but Charlie was up and performing some late-night fiddling this past August, when he revived his popular Volunteer Jam in Nashville.

Volunteer Jam, a celebration of Southern rock featuring Charlie and a plethora of stars, had become an annual tradition ever since the inaugural 1974 fest. But nearly 20 years had passed since Charlie last hosted a Volunteer Jam in Nashville—in 1996, to be exact. The most recent Volunteer Jam of any sort was held in Arkansas in 2008. But judging from the packed house, folks were famished for some Jam. The artists themselves were just as pumped about the Jam's return.

"I sent invitation letters to the artists and we started getting back the RSVPs. It just floored me," recalls Charlie, seated inside the office of his Nashville publicist. "Everybody we contacted wanted to come. It got to the point very early in the game that we had to start looking at possible scheduling problems. We had to make sure we could get everybody on."

Mission successfully accomplished: Billy Ray Cyrus, The Kentucky Headhunters, Trace Adkins, Tracy Lawrence, Ted Nugent, The Oak Ridge Boys and Jam vets Lynyrd Skynyrd were among the acts trotting out to the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville the night of the Jam revival. Eric Church also put in an appearance to sing Charlie's anthem "In America" with the congenial host. "Somebody on our management team told me that Eric would sing one of my songs at some of his shows," Charlie says, explaining how he landed the somewhat elusive singer. "I thought, 'Well, wonder if he'd like to come to Volunteer Jam?' I called him up and he said he'd love to be there."

Charlie's goal was to get everyone onstage by midnight, and he made it, but just under the wire. "Skynyrd finished a few minutes before midnight," says



(Above) Charlie backs Bob Dylan during a session for Bob's *Self Portrait* album in May 1969; (below left) Charlie checks out the *Nashville Cats* exhibit at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum; (below center) recording his new live album from Billy Bob's Texas.



Charlie onstage with guitarist Gary Rossington



CHARLIE DANIELS CONTINUED

Charlie with a chuckle. "It all worked out great. It had that loose, Volunteer Jam spirit to it."

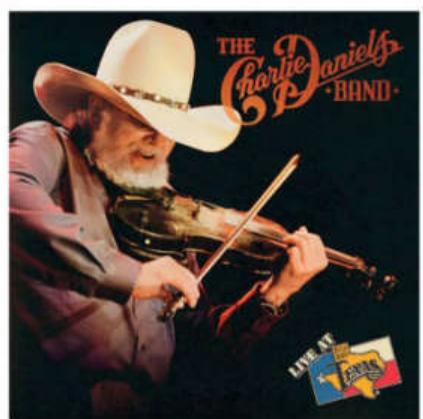
Fans will be pleased to know that Charlie's already planning a 2016 Jam. His hope is to move the show to a weekend night. "We did it on a weeknight this year because of scheduling," Charlie says. "If we had done it on a weekend this time, [being] the first year back, it might have been hard. Most acts are working on the weekend. But now that we have more time to plan everything, we're looking to have this on a weekend, which I think the fans will love."

Volunteer Jam wasn't the only item on Charlie's plate this year. He just released his latest album, *The Charlie Daniels Band Live at Billy Bob's Texas*, on Oct. 16. Plus, Charlie is featured in the Country Music Hall of Fame and



Museum's currently running exhibit *Dylan, Cash and the Nashville Cats: A New Music City*, honoring the session players who helped boost Nashville's profile as a major recording center.

The live album features spirited versions of Charlie and the band's best-loved hits, including "The Devil Went Down to Georgia," "Drinkin' My Baby Goodbye" and "Long Haired Country Boy." Charlie adds a couple of Bob Dylan selections, "Tangled Up in Blue" and "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight," to the mix, choices that may seem a departure for him but actually fit quite naturally into his musical sphere. Charlie, an in-demand session musician early in his career, played on three iconic Dylan albums: the pioneering *Nashville Skyline*, *Self Portrait* and *New Morning*. In 2014, Charlie recorded an album of Dylan tunes titled *Off the Grid—Doin' It*



Dylan. To hear Charlie tell it, the eclectic, often mysterious Dylan strongly influenced Charlie's approach to songwriting and music in general.

"I thought that they really did a good job on the exhibit, first of all," Charlie says. "I never worked with Johnny Cash, but I did work with Bob Dylan many times and all my memories of him are good." That's not exactly what Charlie was expecting when he was recruited for *Nashville Skyline*. The stories revolving around Bob were somewhat legendary and downright scary, often portraying him as a moody, disagreeable sort lacking in basic social skills. Charlie's first meeting with him debunked all of those notions.

"I really didn't know what kind of notions to have," Charlie says, leaning back in his chair. "You heard all these things about Bob Dylan—he's reclusive, he's eccentric, he doesn't talk to

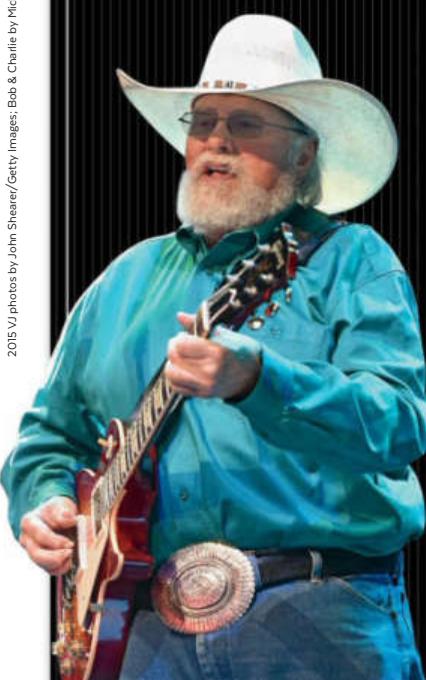
JAM MEMORIES

CHARLIE DANIELS RECALLS A COUPLE OF HIS FAVORITE VOLUNTEER JAM MOMENTS.

Everyone from The King of Country Music, Roy Acuff, to the dukes of Southern rock, Lynyrd Skynyrd, has played Charlie Daniels' Volunteer Jam since the first fest in 1974. Coincidentally, those two wildly divergent acts provided a couple of Charlie's all-time favorite Volunteer Jam memories.

At the 1979 Jam, the surviving members of Lynyrd Skynyrd reunited for the first time after the horrific 1977 plane crash that claimed the lives of Ronnie Van Zant, Steve Gaines, his sister Cassie Gaines and others. Guitarists Gary Rossington and Allen Collins were still having physical problems resulting from the accident. "But they came and played," Charlie says in admiration. "They did an instrumental version of 'Free Bird.' That one stood out for me."

The venerable Mr. Acuff provided another thrill, in a different year. "I was onstage and I looked over to the side and there was one of my all-time heroes, Roy Acuff," Charlie remembers. "It was a Saturday night and this great man took the time to come out in between shows at the Grand Ole Opry. We brought him out and the crowd went wild. I got such a kick out of that."



Doing that Jam thing: (from left) Lynyrd's Skynyrd's Mark Matejka, Rickey Medlocke, Charlie, Gary Rossington and Johnny Colt rock the stage at the 2015 Volunteer Jam in Nashville; (below) other Jam guests included Eric Church (left) and Natalie Stovall.



people. But he was so different than what I expected. Talking to him was just like talking with anyone. He had a great sense of humor. I suppose there is still a certain mystery about him," Charlie adds, "because he's constantly reinventing himself. You never know what he's going to do next." That's where the Dylan influence comes in for Charlie.

"My experiences with Bob have been a very big help to me," Charlie maintains. "I learned about the freedom to do what you want to do." As Charlie recounts, songwriting rules went out the window where Bob was concerned. "You sit down to write a song and the first thing you think about is, will radio play it? Bob just goes in and writes songs," Charlie explains. "He puts all that stuff aside. If a song needs several verses, then you have to go with that. If it's 10 minutes long, then that's what it has to be. Just follow the music and see where it takes

you. I'll never write like he does, but I did learn some valuable lessons."

Charlie's musical year winds up with his current tour, which takes him through mid-December. "We do about 100 dates a year," he says. "That's about enough to make it worth my while." But he's already looking ahead to 2016, with big plans in store. "I want to do an album of cowboy songs—just a stripped-down, back-porch-singing kind of thing. There are a lot of great cowboy songs, but the general public has probably not heard them. There is no place to expose them. As soon as I get a chance," says Charlie, sitting up and smiling, "I'll get around to that."

Volunteer Jam will remain top priority, though. "We had a great roster of talent this year," he says. "There was a little something for everybody. And next year's is going to be even better. You can count on it." **NCW**



WALK IN THE PARK

THE MUSIC CITY WALK OF FAME HONORS FOUR STARS—WITH STARS.

Miranda Lambert, the late Johnny Cash, guitarist supreme Steve Cropper and industry executive E.W. "Bud" Wendell were honored with their own special stars at the Music City Walk of Fame ceremony in Nashville's Walk of Fame Park on Oct. 6. The honor is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to Nashville's musical landscape.

Johnny's brother Tommy Cash accepted the honor on behalf of the Cash family. Following an introduction by Dierks Bentley, Miranda commented, "I feel like a bigger part of Nashville than I ever have." **BOB PAXMAN**



Miranda Lambert addresses the crowd after receiving her award.



Tommy Cash (center) accepts the Walk of Fame honor on behalf of his brother Johnny and the Cash family.



Musicians Hall of Fame and Museum founder Joe Chambers (left) presents guitarist/songwriter Steve Cropper with his star.



Industry and former Grand Ole Opry executive E.W. "Bud" Wendell checks out his new star.

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NASH Country Weekly
COUNTRY FOR LIFE

LEIGH NASH

FOR A CERTAIN SEGMENT of the population, the music of Leigh Nash and Sixpence None the Richer looms large over the late '90s. The wispy melancholy she brought to the band's pop smashes like "Kiss Me" and its cover of The La's' "There She Goes" is the stuff that likely soundtracked a million teenage dates and seduced its way onto as many mix CDs.

And yet, the Texas native, who grew up singing country music, has mentioned on numerous occasions that she'd love to make a country record. That long-held desire finally became a reality in September, when Leigh's album *The Shape I'm In* made its official debut.

"It surprises me even that it took this long," she admits, visiting the Nash campus during a recent round of media appearances. "But I think just the tides of the business world is what has kept it from happening a lot sooner. Just me kind of doing what I have had to do to pay the bills and to keep food on the table for my son, and you've gotta do what makes money."

Leigh's son, Henry, was born in 2004, around the time Sixpence took a hiatus. In the meantime, she released a pop-tinted solo album (*Blue on Blue*) and collaborated with electronic group Delerium on an album called *Fauxlage*. Sixpence eventually reunited to do more recording and play a few shows, but Leigh continued her output of eclectic solo releases with 2011's *Hymns and Sacred Songs*. Leigh, a Nashville resident for nearly 20 years, maintains that she could only have done a country record like *The Shape I'm In* at this point in her career, not at the beginning.

"I think it was better, the path that I took. I loved Sixpence. I loved every minute of what I did with that band and the music that we made," she affirms. "I had such a good time, and I think it got me further. Me on my own, as this 15-, 16-year-old girl from Texas, I don't know how far I would have gotten without a

band that was motivated to do stuff rather than just play in a house."

Though Leigh and Sixpence were initially filed under the Christian music banner, their influences and song topics were considerably further-reaching than that classification implied. *The Shape I'm In* takes a similarly broad approach to interpreting country music, blending Leigh's classic pop sensibility with twangy two-steps and weepy ballads for something that's wonderfully removed from the sound of radio circa 2015.

"The kind of record I was talking about making even as a teenager is this very record, which is the most exciting thing about this," Leigh says. "I really did it with the help of Brendan Benson—the producer—and a few of the co-writers we worked with, who were really able to get what I wanted in my imagination down on a record."

There is still evidence of the lush, dreamy pop Leigh perfected with Sixpence on *The Shape I'm In*. "Chicago," for example, sets a dream sequence against a swooning, string-heavy backdrop worthy of Glen Campbell. On the very next track, "Mountain," a bouncy, cheerful melody and horns transform a tale of struggle and disappointment into one of resilience and optimism. For Leigh, it's a matter of taking those old country influences she grew up hearing and pairing them sensibly with the moody pop of an artist like Roy Orbison or the Beach Boys.

"The artists that I'm so into and the

songs that have stuck with me my whole life, that just doesn't go away. It's like a tattoo," she says.

Leigh's native Texas establishes a large presence on *The Shape I'm In*, including the feisty title track's declarations of Lone Star pride among fiddle, steel and mariachi horns. "Somebody's Yesterday," on the other hand, casts a backward look at a heartbreak that once made the vast openness of Texas seem suffocating. Near the album's end, she feels torn between the home she remembers in Texas and the one she's made in Tennessee.

"I moved here when I was 19. So now I've officially been here as long as I was in Texas," she explains. "But I still feel that struggle or that tug back home a lot, and my mom has not ever quite gotten over me moving away in the first place. Now my son is getting older; I can't imagine how that would feel if he just left to be in a band when he was 19."

Her son is now old enough to know what his mother and her friends achieved in Sixpence, and seeing them play at Nashville's Live on the Green a few years ago opened his eyes.

"I think it really freaked him out," Leigh says. "It was like, this was how it was at one time for them. His dad was watching the show with him and he said Henry was like, 'What is going on?' I can't imagine what

that would feel like. That's your mom, the person that does all the things in your world. And then all of a sudden all these people are watching her."

Of course, any '90s kid could've told him that.

JON FREEMAN



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The Shape I'm In



BEHIND THE SONG

BURIED TREASURE





WHEN LUKE LAIRD INKED his very first publishing deal, seasoned songwriter Craig Wiseman took the Pennsylvania native under his wing and offered plenty of advice. "We've always had a cool relationship," says Luke. "I have always been a big fan, and whenever we get the chance to write together, it's always such an honor."

After finding some success in 2008 with the Blake Shelton and Trace Adkins duet "Hillbilly Bone," Craig and Luke decided to get back together to see what else they could create. When that day finally arrived, neither Luke nor Craig had a specific direction in mind as to where they wanted to go with their song. Luke's creative wheels began spinning, resulting in him doing some beatboxing (vocalizing percussive sounds) to set the tone. That lighthearted touch proved to be just what Craig needed to build a structure for a track, adding lyrics piece by piece.

"We were obviously not trying to change the world or anything when we were writing this song," says Luke, laughing. "We just wanted to write something that was fun for us to play."

As they began to spitball different lines, the two combined the best of both worlds with their individual strengths as songwriters and musicians, using quirky lyrics and unique hooks. "Craig just amazes me with some of the lines he comes up with," gushes Luke. "He does stuff like *Love you all night long 'til the crickets stop chirping* or *Gonna put a little rock steady on your hand*. It's just so much fun."

"Luke writes with such a smile," Craig adds of Luke's work inside the writing room. "He's a happy guy. He's a great soul, and he actually writes that way. So many of his things I hear, and it makes me smile."

By the day's end, the two had finished their new song, "Gonna." As with all their songs, a demo was made and tucked away into their

"GONNA" BLAKE SHELTON

WRITERS:



Craig Wiseman



Luke Laird

THE GOOD STUFF

Over the past several years, **CRAIG WISEMAN** has become one of Nashville's most sought-after songwriters. His portfolio ranges from Tim McGraw's "Live Like You Were Dying" to Kenny Chesney's "The Good Stuff" and many other hits. Most recently, Craig was inducted into the 2015 class of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame.

individual catalogs to wait and see what its destiny held. Years went by and hundreds more songs were written between the two. It wasn't until Craig's new song plugger came aboard with Big Loud Shirt that "Gonna" was pulled out of the catalog to send to Blake Shelton's producer, Scott Hendricks. "He literally went through 6,000 songs to get familiar with my catalog and stumbled upon that one," Craig notes. "It was sent to Hendricks and put on hold just like that. I was blown away!"

Blake cut "Gonna" for his *Bringing Back the Sunshine* album, and it was released as the fourth single. Like all of Blake's previous releases, the song wasted no time cracking the Top 10 on *Billboard's* country singles chart, where it currently remains on track to continue his streak of chart-toppers.

"Everything about this song just felt really good to us after we wrote it," says Luke. "I didn't know if anybody would ever record it, but I guess it was just waiting for the right artist all this time."

ALANNA CONAWAY

CHARTS

The week of Oct. 24, 2015

TOP 25 BILLBOARD ALBUMS

TW	LW	TITLE / ARTIST
1	2	COLD BEER CONVERSATION GEORGE STRAIT
2	1	CASS COUNTY DON HENLEY
3	3	TANGLED UP THOMAS RHETT
4	4	KILL THE LIGHTS LUKE BRYAN
5	5	MONTEVALLO SAM HUNT
6	8	JEKYLL + HYDE ZAC BROWN BAND
7	6	SOUTHERN DRAWL ALABAMA
8	7	ILLINOIS BRETT ELDREDGE
9	9	THE OUTSIDERS ERIC CHURCH
10	32	CLOSER (EP) KANE BROWN
11	12	START HERE MADDIE & TAE
12	-	PARADISE THE WOOD BROTHERS
13	11	PAIN KILLER LITTLE BIG TOWN
14	10	ANYTHING GOES FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE
15	15	OLD BOOTS, NEW DIRT JASON ALDEAN
16	14	ANGELS AND ALCOHOL ALAN JACKSON
17	17	JUST AS I AM BRANTLEY GILBERT
18	13	ON PURPOSE CLINT BLACK
19	37	ANGELS AMONG US: HYMNS & GOSPEL FAVORITES • ALABAMA
20	19	NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL COUNTRY, VOLUME 8 • VARIOUS ARTISTS
21	20	IGNITE THE NIGHT CHASE RICE
22	16	TURNPIKE TROUBADOURS TURNPIKE TROUBADOURS
23	18	PAGEANT MATERIAL KACEY MUSGRAVES
24	25	SOMETHING MORE THAN FREE JASON ISBELL
25	26	GREATEST HITS SO FAR... ZAC BROWN BAND

TOP 25 BILLBOARD SINGLES

TW	LW	TITLE / ARTIST
1	2	LOSE MY MIND BRETT ELDREDGE
2	3	STRIP IT DOWN LUKE BRYAN
3	1	SAVE IT FOR A RAINY DAY KENNY CHESNEY
4	5	ANYTHING GOES FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE
5	6	GONNA WANNA TONIGHT CHASE RICE
6	7	BREAK UP WITH HIM OLD DOMINION
7	8	LET ME SEE YA GIRL COLE SWINDELL
8	9	SMOKE BREAK CARRIE UNDERWOOD
9	10	FLY MADDIE & TAE
10	11	NOTHIN' LIKE YOU DAN + SHAY
11	12	GONNA BLAKE SHELTON
12	13	I'M COMIN' OVER CHRIS YOUNG
13	4	JOHN COUGAR, JOHN DEERE, JOHN 3:16 • KEITH URBAN
14	14	GONNA KNOW WE WERE HERE JASON ALDEAN
15	15	TOP OF THE WORLD TIM McGRAW
16	16	BURNING HOUSE CAM
17	17	STAY A LITTLE LONGER BROTHERS OSBORNE
18	18	RUN AWAY WITH YOU BIG & RICH
19	19	ALREADY CALLIN' YOU MINE PARMALEE
20	20	DIBS KELSEA BALLERINI
21	22	I GOT THE BOY JANA KRAMER
22	21	I LOVE THIS LIFE LOCASH
23	24	COUNTRY NATION BRAD PAISLEY
24	25	WE WENT RANDY HOUSER
25	23	21 HUNTER HAYES

TOP 10 AMERICANA AIRPLAY

TW	LW	TITLE / ARTIST
1	1	SOMETHING MORE THAN FREE JASON ISBELL
2	2	SERVANT OF LOVE PATTY GRIFFIN
3	3	LOST TIME DAVE ALVIN & PHIL ALVIN
4	5	PANHANDLE RAMBLER JOE ELY
5	10	SOUTH BROADWAY ATHLETIC CLUB BOTTLE ROCKETS
6	4	PAGEANT MATERIAL KACEY MUSGRAVES
7	24	SERMON ON THE ROCKS JOSH RITTER
8	7	GATES OF GOLD LOS LOBOS
9	6	TURNPIKE TROUBADOURS TURNPIKE TROUBADOURS
10	13	PARADISE THE WOOD BROTHERS

SOURCE: AMERICANA AIRPLAY CHART

rdio TOP 5 TRENDING COUNTRY SONGS*

TW	TITLE / ARTIST
1	STRIP IT DOWN LUKE BRYAN
2	TAKE YOUR TIME SAM HUNT
3	RUNNIN' OUTTA MOONLIGHT RANDY HOUSER
4	DIE A HAPPY MAN THOMAS RHETT
5	TURN IT ON ELI YOUNG BAND

TOP 5 TRENDING COUNTRY/AMERICANA/SOUTHERN ALBUMS*

TW	TITLE / ARTIST
1	35 MPH TOWN TOBY KEITH
2	THIRTY ONE JANA KRAMER
3	JEKYLL + HYDE ZAC BROWN BAND
4	MICHAEL RAY MICHAEL RAY
5	SPEAK NOW TAYLOR SWIFT

*DATA FROM OCT. 12, 2015

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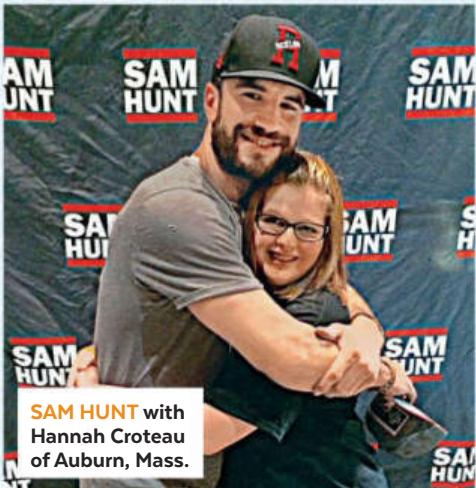
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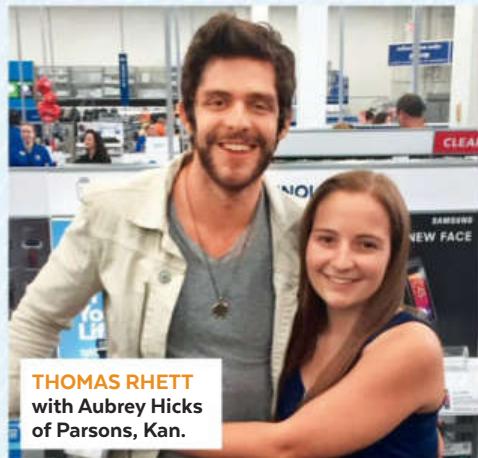
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with
Hannah Croteau
of Auburn, Mass.



Rene Del Arroz of West
Sacramento, Calif.,
with **PARMALEE**



EASTON CORBIN
with Ashley West
of Wellington, Ohio



THOMAS RHETT
with Aubrey Hicks
of Parsons, Kan.



Ashlea Grimes
of Ohioville, Pa.,
with **LUKE BRYAN**



THOMPSON SQUARE
with Dotti Spina
of Sauquoit, N.Y.

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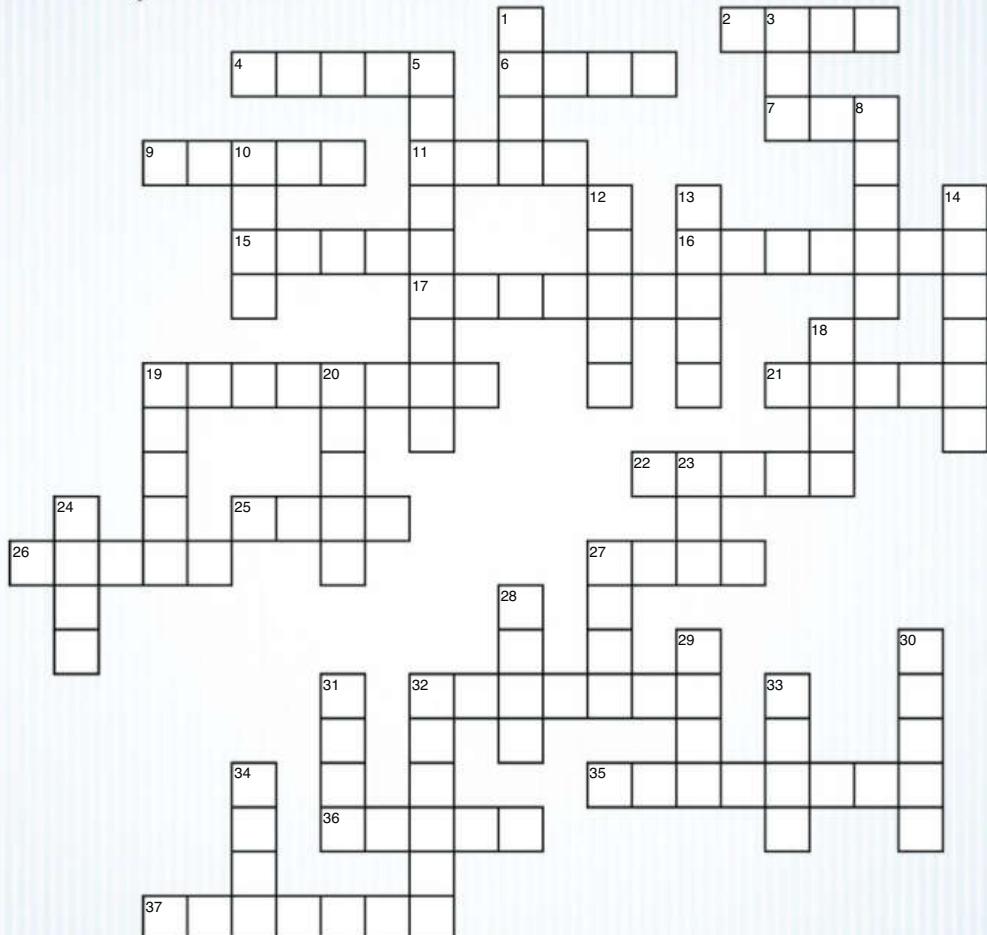


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by John Reiman



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- 7** Willie Nelson's "Nothing I Can Do About It ___"
- 9** "My Give a Damn's Busted" singer
- 11** Miranda Lambert's "Fastest ___ in Town"
- 15** DWTS winner Willis
- 16** Actress Portman
- 17** Sara Evans' "I Keep ___"
- 19** Chuck Wicks' "___ Cinderella"
- 21** "Pretty Little Adriana" singer
- 22** "The Beaches of Cheyenne" singer
- 25** Dan + Shay's "Nothin' ___ You"
- 26** Jason Aldean's "___ Know We Were Here"
- 27** ___ E. Coyote
- 32** David Letterman's *Late Night* successor Stephen ___
- 35** New Mexico caverns
- 36** 1950s-'70s hitmaker James
- 37** Marty Stuart and Travis Tritt's "The ___ Ain't Workin'"

DOWN

- 1** ___ grapes
- 3** Homonym for #24 Down
- 5** "Stay" singers
- 8** Tracy Lawrence's "If the ___ Had a Front Porch"
- 10** ___ bag
- 12** Tim McGraw's "Just to See You ___"
- 13** Love and Theft's "___ Eyes"
- 14** Completely amazing; beyond ___
- 18** The Oak Ridge Boys' "No Matter How ___"
- 19** Seville is here
- 20** Montgomery Gentry's "___ Man"
- 23** Josh Turner's "___ Over Me"
- 24** Opposite of #23 Down
- 27** James Joyce's *Finnegans ___*
- 28** Longest river in the world
- 29** Kenny Chesney's "Big ___"
- 30** "Love Can Build a Bridge" singers
- 31** Patty Loveless and George Jones' "You Don't Seem to ___ Me"
- 32** Kenny Rogers' "Coward of the ___"
- 33** 2015 Johnny Depp movie *Black ___*
- 34** Surrealist painter Salvador ___

Three holiday treasures in one!

The Thomas Kinkade "Making Spirits Bright"

Illuminated Musical Crystal Candle

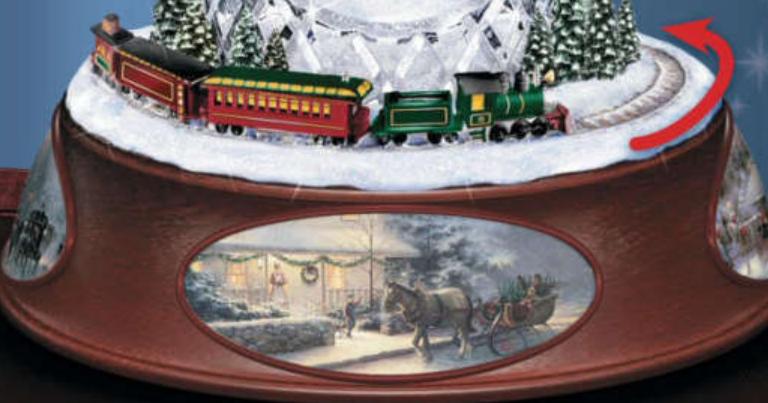
Lights up!

Candle's "flame" and each 3-D building light up from within



Listen!

It plays a medley of 8 caroling favorites, including "Deck the Halls" and "Jingle Bells"



Shown smaller than actual size of about 10" H. Uses 2 "AA" batteries (not included). Adaptor and electric tea light included.

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A genuine crystal holiday masterpiece featuring best-loved Thomas Kinkade artwork along with lights, music and motion!

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Flip the switch and watch as the miniature train circles the base

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This Thomas Kinkade crystal treasure can be yours for \$99.99*, payable in three installments of \$33.33, with one due before shipment. There's no risk with our unconditional 365-day money-back guarantee. But don't wait to order—the edition is strictly limited and strong demand is likely. Send no money now, just complete and return the Reservation Application!

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Limit: one per order.

Please Respond Promptly

Signature _____

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____

Name (Please Print Clearly) _____

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*Plus a total of \$14.99 shipping and service. Limited-edition presentation restricted to 95 firing days. Please allow 4-8 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

NASH Country Weekly

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FEELING SOCIAL?

Anxiously awaiting that new album from your favorite artist?

Eager to discuss the hot concert you just saw?

Connect with NASH Country Weekly and fellow fans online and join our community!



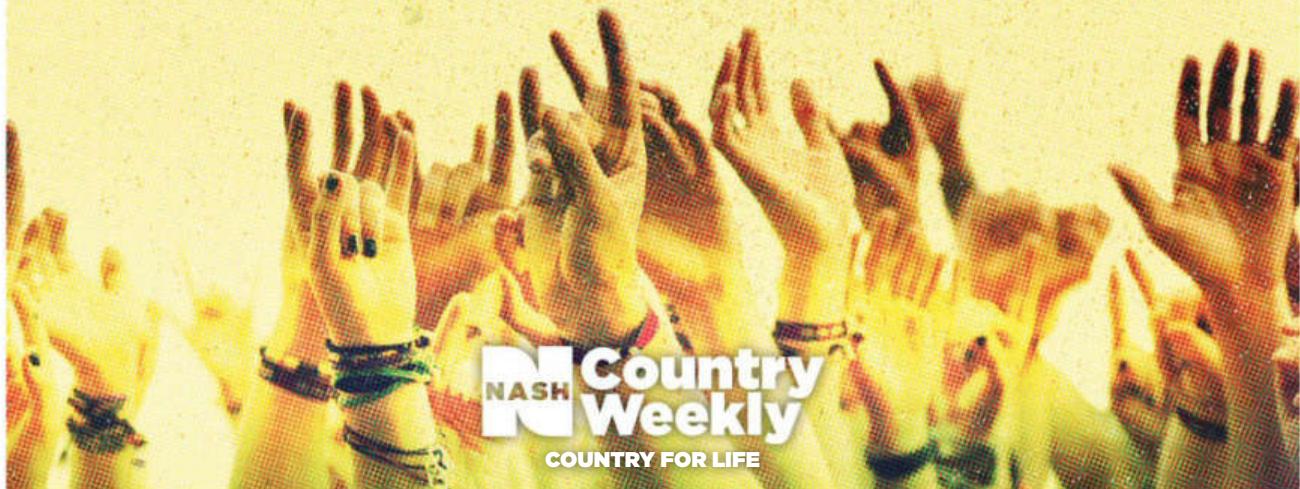
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"Lone Wolf" Men's Hoodie



Back

Front

**Black cotton blend knit with
knit-rib cuffs and hem and soft
fleece lining**

**Contrasting grey lining
in hood**

**Striking Al Agnew wolf art printed
on the back and embroidered on
the front**

For Those Who Love the Spirit of Adventure!

Show your love of intrigue and adventure when you wear our exclusive "Lone Wolf" Men's Hoodie featuring the artwork of famed wildlife artist, Al Agnew. Crafted in a machine-washable cotton-blend knit, our hoodie features classic zip-front styling. The front of the hoodie showcases an embroidered silver wolf by Al Agnew. A dramatic close-up portrait of Mr. Agnew's wolf is printed on the back, standing out in striking contrast to the black knit background. The hoodie has two front pockets, knit rib cuffs and hem, and a soft fleece lining. The hood features contrasting gray lining and silver-toned metal toggles on the cords.

Exceptional value; satisfaction guaranteed

This jacket is a superb value at \$89.95*, payable in four installments of \$22.49 each and backed by our 30-day guarantee. Send no money now; just return the Reservation Application. With its generous, comfortable fit and its mid-weight warmth, the "Lone Wolf" Men's Hoodie is the perfect choice for that next walk in the woods—or anywhere your adventure takes you. You won't find this exclusive design in stores. So don't miss out—order yours today!

www.bradfordexchange.com/wolfhoodie

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RESERVATION APPLICATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW

**THE
BRADFORD EXCHANGE
APPAREL & ACCESSORIES**

9345 Milwaukee Avenue • Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the "Lone Wolf" Men's Hoodie for me as described in this announcement in the size indicated.

- Medium (38-40) 01-19401-011 XL (46-48) 01-19401-013
 Large (42-44) 01-19401-012 XXL (50-52) 01-19401-014

Signature _____

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____

Name (Please Print Clearly) _____

Address _____

City _____

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Zip _____

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*Plus a total of \$11.99 shipping and service. Please allow 2-4 weeks after initial payment for shipment. All sales are subject to product availability and order acceptance.

"I know probably not every word, but I'd say I know a solid 80 percent of all Limp Bizkit's albums."

CARRIE UNDERWOOD



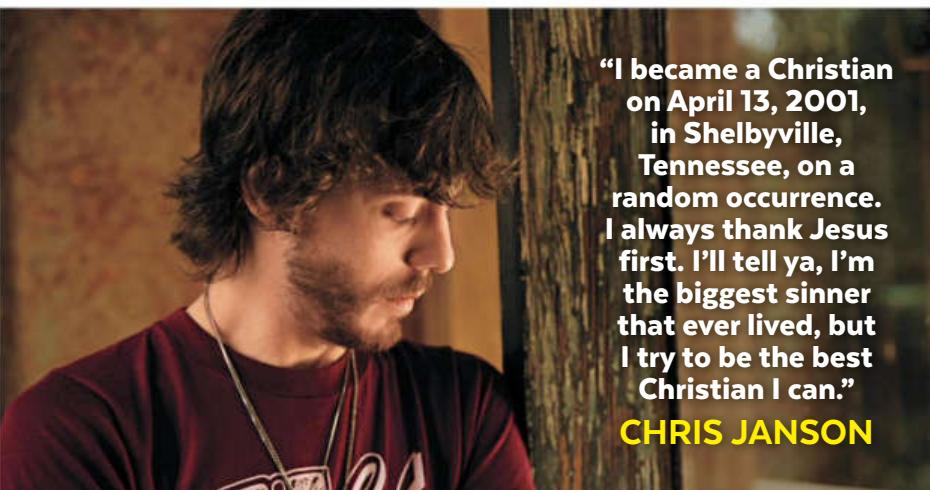
KELLEY FACE-OFF

BRIAN KELLEY	NAME	CHARLES KELLEY
FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE	GROUP	LADY ANTEBELLUM
6'3"	HEIGHT	6'6"
FLORIDA	HOME STATE	GEORGIA
0	GRAMMYS	7
8	BILLBOARD NO. 1 SONGS	9
MODIFIED VANILLA ICE	HAIRSTYLE	THE RYAN GOSLING



"I became a Christian on April 13, 2001, in Shelbyville, Tennessee, on a random occurrence. I always thank Jesus first. I'll tell ya, I'm the biggest sinner that ever lived, but I try to be the best Christian I can."

CHRIS JANSON



SOUND PLOWING

At the inaugural CMA Awards in 1967, baritone crooner **EDDY ARNOLD** was named Entertainer of the Year. Eddy, who was nicknamed "The Tennessee

Plowboy" for his West Tennessee farming roots, was a pioneer of the Nashville Sound, a mixture of country and pop stylings.



LEGENDS Never Die

On the 1980 concept album *The Legend of Jesse James*, **CHARLIE DANIELS** sang the role of outlaw Cole Younger. Other artists who contributed to the album include Levon Helm (Jesse James), Johnny Cash (Frank James) and Emmylou Harris (Zerelda James).



SHOW-ME SINGERS

DAVID NAIL hails from Kennett, Mo., a city of less than 11,000 people in the Missouri Bootheel. A few other Show Me State singers with country roots include **SARA EVANS** (Boonville), **SHERYL CROW** (Kennett) and **TYLER FARR** (Garden City).



CROSSWORD SOLUTION (SEE PAGE 60)



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I LOVE *Kellie Pickler*

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